



Inspection report

Oakwood Infant School

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 115903
LEA Hampshire

Inspection number 269365
Inspection dates 5 - 7 October 2004
Reporting inspector David Rzeznik HMI

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the school Inspectors Act 1996, and was deemed section 12(3) under the same act.

Type of School	Infant School	School address	Church Lane
School category	Community		Hartley Wintney
Age range of pupils	4 - 7		Hook
			Hampshire
			RG27 8DZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01252 842663
Number on roll	157	Fax number	01252 842663
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr John Humphries
Date of previous inspection	June 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Janet Kelly

Age group	Published	Reference no.
4 - 7	November 2004	269365

Introduction

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in its consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of the staff of Oakwood Infant School and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an independent lay inspector.

Description of the school

Oakwood Infant School is in the village of Hartley Wintney in Hampshire. It caters for pupils from four to seven years of age and is smaller than most primary schools. Pupils start school in the September following their fourth birthday and the youngest children attend part time for the first term. Most pupils stay until they transfer to the local junior school at aged seven. Almost all the pupils are of white ethnic origin. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. A small number of Traveller children attend the school. The number of pupils claiming free school meals is below the national figure. Attainment on entry to the school is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Overall effectiveness of the school

This is a good school that does not rest on its laurels. It continually seeks improvement and provides good value for money. By the age of seven pupils reach well above average standards in English, mathematics and science and they make good progress in these subjects over time. The good teaching and support, together with the wide opportunities offered, contribute to their successes. Pupils' personal development is excellent. They are happy, very well cared for and love coming to school. Leadership and management are good and subject managers have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas that need further improvement. Parents value the work of the school highly. Assessment and monitoring procedures are good. However, better use could be made of the information gained from these activities to further improve teaching and learning and track pupils' achievement over time.

Grade: 2

Improvement since the last inspection

Good progress has been achieved since the previous inspection. The school has successfully built on its strengths and maintained the well above average standards achieved by pupils, and the good quality teaching. Issues raised by the last inspection team have been addressed successfully. Assessment and recording systems are better; the school has formalised its health and safety procedures and now effectively evaluates whether it is achieving value for money. Accommodation has significantly improved over the years.

Grade: 2

Capacity to improve

The headteacher and governing body are united in their intention to improve the school while maintaining a rigorous focus on raising pupils' achievement and the quality of education provided. Clear strategic thinking and effective planning for improvement have been instrumental in moving the school forward. The school's self evaluation is based on a detailed review of the school's performance and sets out realistic targets to bring about improvement in many aspects of the school's work. The school is well placed to improve further.

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

In order to continue to raise standards, the school should:

- use the information gained during monitoring activities more effectively to improve the quality of teaching and learning

- use the available information on pupils' performance more effectively to evaluate the progress they make over time

Achievement and standards

When pupils enter the reception class their performance is above that expected of youngsters of this age. By the end of the reception year pupils achieve well in all areas of learning and particularly so in their personal, social and emotional development. This is because teaching is effective and the curriculum meets the needs and interests of the children very well. Children enjoy being at school and in the short time they have been there have become settled and happy.

Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by the age of seven. Results show good improvement over recent years and at a rate better than school's nationally. The evidence seen during lessons and in pupils' books shows that tasks get more challenging and all pupils, including Travellers and those with SEN, make good progress overall. The more able pupils are achieving very well.

The personal development of pupils is excellent. Pupils like coming to school, feel safe and as a result attendance levels are high. They arrive punctually and quickly settle to their work. Pupils' attitudes to work are very positive and they are keen to learn. These are key ingredients in ensuring that they make good progress as they move through the school.

Because of the school's high expectations, behaviour is good in lessons and pupils move around the building very sensibly. Pupils take great pride in their responsibilities and are very supportive of each other. One example of this is the Year 2 'playground friends' project. These pupils carefully escort anyone who has been hurt to the first aid post.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. As a result, pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and have well developed social skills and the necessary personal qualities for living and working together. Pupils play an active part in their local community, for instance, putting forward ideas and suggestions to inform the development plan for the village.

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

The school rightly judges the quality of provision to be good overall. The inspection team observed all of the teachers and judged the overall quality of teaching and learning as good, with pockets of highly effective teaching. In the very best lessons teaching is innovative, stimulating and challenging. For example, in a Year 2 history lesson the teacher made good use of Victorian artefacts to take on the role of Florence Nightingale, and acted in character to answer pupils' questions about her life and work. Pupils were engrossed and made considerably better progress than might be expected. A further strength of the teaching was the way different teaching strategies and methods, such as 'helping hand' and 'talking partners' reinforce learning. Staff relate well to pupils and this leads to a positive ethos in

class. Well directed teaching assistants provide considerable support to pupils and teachers and contribute significantly to effective learning.

At times teaching does not sufficiently ensure that lessons meet pupils' individual needs. Some of the less able pupils sometimes lack sufficient guidance to ensure they develop as independent learners. Also, occasionally, teaching lacks pace and pupils' interest diminishes as a result. Effective practices are in place for assessing pupils' work in all subjects. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Assessment is used directly in planning teaching and setting realistic targets.

The curriculum is good overall. It is well-planned, broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Curriculum policies and schemes of work are clear and there is a secure framework for planning which takes account of the different needs of learners. The weeks when the whole school takes part in a range of activities related to a story are valuable and appreciated by pupils, because they give pupils the chance to use and further develop their communication and social skills. All pupils have full access to the curriculum which is enriched by visitors and educational visits. Outings to the farm and the postal sorting office result in pupils talking to adults about their jobs and this provides a good introduction to the world of work. Additional activities include weekly recorder, French and games clubs. These are well supported and provide good opportunities for pupils to further their musical and other interests.

The school is a happy place where the care, guidance and support provided for the pupils are excellent. Pupils say they feel safe and secure and are well looked after. The procedures for introducing the very youngest pupils into the reception classes are very effective. As a result, pupils settle quickly and happily into school life. This has been so successful that one parent said that her son cries at weekends because he can't go to school! The school, parents and other agencies work well together and there are secure arrangements for child protection and for health and safety. The school effectively promotes healthy living through subjects such as science and physical education and through talks from catering staff. Such work enables pupils to understand the importance of being healthy and keeping safe.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher knows the school well and is pivotal to its success. Clear vision and high aspirations have resulted in a professional and reflective culture, where staff share a common purpose and make an effective contribution to achieving the school's aims. The governing body is effective. It is fully involved in strategic planning and formulating policies, and ensures the school meets its statutory responsibilities.

The school monitors its work effectively and has an accurate understanding of its main strengths and relative weaknesses. Substantial amounts of information are generated by the school to analyse its performance and set targets. It does not yet make the fullest use of this information to systematically improve the quality of teaching and learning, or use the performance information to more effectively evaluate pupils' progress over time.

The school is inclusive and successfully promotes a strong sense of community. It serves the needs of Travellers, SEN and the more able pupils particularly well ensuring they achieve as much as they can. The parents are full of praise for the work of the school, in particular, the very successful arrangements for settling pupils into the reception classes and for helping them to be involved fully in school life.

Grade: 2

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