



Curridge Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109811
LEA West Berkshire LEA
Inspection number 278277
Inspection dates 5 October 2005 to 5 October 2005
Reporting inspector Bradley Simmons HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Curridge
School category	Community		Thatcham
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Berkshire RG18 9DZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01635200486
Number on roll	95	Fax number	01635202295
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Lesley Dick
Date of previous inspection	18 October 1999	Headteacher	Mr Jeremy Spencer

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 5 October 2005 - 5 October 2005	Inspection number 278277
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector.

Description of the school

Curridge Primary School is situated in a rural part of West Berkshire. There are 94 pupils on roll aged between 4 and 11 years. At present there are no pupils entitled to a free school meal. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is slightly below the national average. A very small number of pupils speak English as an additional language; very slightly more pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The school serves the local area which includes a sizeable amount of accommodation for families of HM Forces. This gives rise to a shifting school population. Overall, 50% of pupils do not begin or complete their primary education at this school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

A parent of a child at this school commented: 'I am sure my child could not have had a better start to his education.' Inspectors agree fully. The school evaluates its performance as outstanding, and is right to do so. Curridge Primary is a highly effective and inclusive school, where all staff do their utmost to make the best possible academic and personal provision for every child. Provision and standards in the Foundation Stage are very good. Throughout the school, all pupils make very good progress because of skilled and talented teaching, underpinned by the clear vision and outstanding leadership of the headteacher. The school is constantly seeking ways to improve. Its capacity to do so is demonstrated by the very robust and considered strategies which have already borne fruit in terms of improving pupils' achievement. Governors challenge and support the school very effectively, but school improvement planning does not enable governors to gain a precise view of the school's ambition for each cohort group of pupils.

What the school should do to improve further

* Sharpen school improvement planning to include annual reading, writing and mathematics targets for each year group so governors are better able to hold the school to account.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The school correctly believes that achievement and standards are outstanding. When pupils start their reception year, their attainment is as expected for this age. All pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic backgrounds, make very good progress and the majority attain high standards by the time they leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to their starting points. The school sets challenging targets for pupils in English and mathematics, and pupils generally meet these. Nevertheless, the school is not complacent. Its well informed self evaluation procedures have revealed that there is capacity for further improvement. As a result, it has developed considered strategies to ensure that pupils make even better progress in mathematics and writing. At the time of the last inspection, standards in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) were unsatisfactory. These are now at least in line with national expectations and the school has clear plans to ensure pupils' achievement rises further.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are excellent. During assemblies, pupils reflect on moral issues, sing and pray. These warm whole-school occasions are also used to recognise both the social and academic achievements of pupils; pupils

beam with pride when they are handed their achievement certificates. Pupils have a keen understanding of the importance of charitable fundraising and of the need to take responsibility for others. The vast majority of parents believe that behaviour at Curridge is very good. They are correct. Pupils' attitudes to work and play are excellent. There is a very positive work ethic in every classroom, and pupils strive successfully to meet the high expectations of their teachers. Pupils' enjoyment is reflected in their very high rate of attendance each day. The school has been very successful in heightening pupils' awareness of healthy eating and exercise. An increasing number of pupils form part of the 'walking bus' initiated by the school and managed by parents. School lunches are nutritious and well balanced; a considerable number of pupils were enjoying roast chicken legs with cooked fresh vegetables on the day of the inspection. The school council feels valued by the staff, and offers its views to the headteacher. For example, at the time of the inspection school council members were pursuing the extension of the free fruit scheme for Key Stage 1 pupils so that Key Stage 2 pupils may also benefit from this.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching at Curridge is outstanding. It consistently challenges pupils and enables them to make very good progress during the time they are at the school. Teachers have high expectations of pupils; they expect them to work hard and do their best and pupils rise to this challenge. Very skilled teaching absorbs pupils and a very good range of teaching styles and planning for varying ability levels ensure that the needs of all learners are met very effectively. Teaching assistants are very effectively deployed; they achieve an excellent balance of timely intervention and promoting independent learning. The school has highly developed systems of assessment which pinpoint areas of weakness in pupils' performance. These are then addressed to ensure pupils' performance in these areas improves. Marking is outstanding; it provides a clear record of pupils' achievements over time and gives pupils the information they need to make more progress. Pupils told inspectors how much they appreciated this. Planning for, and assessment of, the needs of pupils with special educational needs is outstanding. As a result, these pupils make very good progress in relation to their starting points.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is broad, balanced and it inspires pupils. Provision for ICT has improved considerably since the last inspection, and interactive whiteboards are very effectively used by teachers to bring the curriculum to life. There is a well judged focus on the basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics and ICT so pupils are very well prepared for secondary school. Homework is used very effectively to support pupils' learning at school and teachers make the time to ensure that pupils have understood the tasks they have completed. Particularly noteworthy in this small school are the number of

extra-curricular activities offered to pupils. The school has acted on parents' views and consequently makes equal extra-curricular provision for both infants and juniors. Although the school has no playing field, the school council spoke with enthusiasm about the number of sporting opportunities they enjoy; the school has rightly been awarded 'Activemark Gold' for its excellent provision in this area.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school takes very good care of its pupils. Very robust child protection procedures are in place and the school site is very well maintained and secured during the school day. Pupils' personal and academic progress is monitored very carefully. Pupils are aware of their academic targets, and through oral feedback from teachers, and marking, they know what they have to do to reach these. Pupils behave in a safe manner. There have been no reported incidences of bullying at the school for several years, but pupils understand clearly the action that the school will take should this arise. The school draws on outside agencies very appropriately to build the expertise of staff and to ensure pupils make very good progress. For example, staff attended training to help them support the needs of pupils on the autistic spectrum. During the inspection, the support these pupils received was very good, and, as a result, they were focused and motivated.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership of the school believes it is good. Inspectors disagree. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. He is supported by a team of teachers and teaching assistants who are very well informed and committed to raising pupils' achievement still further. Inspectors found reflective practitioners who consult parents and pupils, and act on their views where appropriate. Staff are willing and able to be critical of their own and the school's performance, and they act rigorously to ensure that every area of school life meets the level of the best. Governors are actively involved with the school. Evidence demonstrates that they hold the school to account as well as encouraging the staff in their endeavours. They receive clear annual reports from each subject leader on developments within each subject area and ask pertinent questions in relation to these. School improvement planning should be sharpened; although covering all those areas that the school has identified for improvement, the plan should contain annual reading, writing and mathematics targets for each year group so that governors may better hold the school to account.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. As you know, we talked to many of you throughout the day to help us decide how good Curridge School is. I told some of you that I would write to you all to tell you what we found out.

If we lived in the same area as you, we would send our children to Curridge School. We think it is a fantastic school. This probably does not surprise you, as most of you and your parents think the same! Here are just a few of the things we really liked about it: * Your headteacher, Mr. Spencer, is an outstanding leader. He is always trying to make your school as perfect as it can be. * Your teachers and teaching assistants really care about how well you do. They do their jobs extremely well, work extremely hard and make you all feel included. * You work very hard and make very good progress at Curridge School. You do your homework with care and this helps you make quicker progress at school. * You like the many opportunities you have to join clubs and to take part in sporting activities. * You are rightly very proud of your school and enjoy coming to school each day.

We wish you every success in the future. Keep up the very good work!