



Oaklands Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109865
LEA Wokingham District Council
Inspection number 278295
Inspection dates 8 May 2006 to 9 May 2006
Reporting inspector Nicola Davies AI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Butler Road
School category	Community		Crowthorne
Age range of pupils	4 to 7		RG45 6QZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01344 774644
Number on roll	183	Fax number	01344 772375
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Alistair Crooks
Date of previous inspection	15 May 2000	Headteacher	Miss Julie Sheppard

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized infant school serving a socially advantaged area. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Oaklands Infants is a popular school where pupils work hard and enjoy their education. Inspectors agree with the school and the local community that this is an effective and caring school that gives good value for money.

Although some children spend only a term in the Foundation Stage, they all get a good start to their education. Good teaching and a varied curriculum throughout pupils' time in the school mean that they make good progress and attain good standards. Leadership and management are good. One reason for this is that the headteacher, staff and governors work well together to identify what they need to improve and jointly plan how to do this. For example, they have identified that not all more-able pupils exceed the expected standards in reading and mathematics. As a result they have set higher targets and are tracking pupils' progress carefully towards these. However, they are not yet using lesson observations to make sure that activities for more-able pupils are challenging enough in all lessons. The good care and support for pupils is appreciated by parents and means that pupils mature as they go through the school. Pupils are friendly and confident but have limited opportunities to use their growing personal skills to support the work of the school.

Clear leadership and management mean that the school has successfully addressed all the issues raised in the previous inspection. For example, it has improved the way that teachers monitor pupils' progress. It has significantly improved standards in writing by giving pupils opportunities in which they let their imaginations run riot. Such successes indicate that the school has the capacity to continue improving.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure that activities for more-able pupils are consistently challenging.
- Ensure that pupils have good opportunities to use their personal skills to contribute to the life of the school community.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children join the Foundation Stage with a variety of strengths and experiences but generally have appropriate skills for their age. They make good progress and meet the expected learning goals by the end of their time in the Reception classes. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and achieve good standards overall. The school has significantly improved the quality of pupils' writing over the past two years and standards in writing are now exceptionally high. The school has now turned its attention to ensuring that more-able pupils achieve just as highly in reading and mathematics. As a result it has set challenging targets in these subjects which pupils look on-course to meet. There are no significant differences between how well girls and boys achieve overall. However, the school has identified that fewer girls do

exceptionally well in mathematics and, similarly, fewer boys in English. It has taken action to address this. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress in relation to their starting points.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school. This is one of the reasons why their attendance is good. Another is that they say that their lessons are 'fun'. Children make good progress in their personal development in the Foundation Stage and this is built on effectively in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are friendly, confident and respect the feelings of others. They co-operate well. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. This is in response to the good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils follow the school and their class rules and understand that these rules help keep everyone safe and happy. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They respond well to opportunities for reflection in collective worship and within the curriculum. Pupils know how to stay safe and healthy. They eat healthy snacks and enjoy taking part in physical exercise. Pupils take their responsibilities as monitors seriously but they have limited opportunities to contribute to the school community.

Pupils have a growing awareness of economic matters. They participate in charity events and carefully collect supermarket vouchers to help the school buy extra equipment. Their good basic skills, positive attitudes and good behaviour prepare them well for their next school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and contributes to pupils achieving well. Teachers plan carefully and make good use of resources. This means that pupils are keen to learn and enjoy their lessons. For example, Reception children were delighted to help a puppet parrot identify the sounds at the beginning of words. Pupils work well with their 'carpet chums' to explain their thinking and discuss their work and ideas. Teachers work well with teaching assistants who make a good contribution to pupils' learning, particularly in supporting small groups of pupils.

Teachers use a good range of strategies to assess pupils' work and to set targets for improvement. However, this information is not always used sharply enough in setting challenges for some more-able pupils in lessons. Teachers involve pupils well in assessing their own learning and judging their own progress. This means that even some of the youngest pupils can explain what they do well and what they need to do to get better.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of all pupils. It is interesting and makes good links between subjects so that pupils' work in one subject helps develop their skills in other areas. For example, in one outstanding session, Year 2 pupils assembled a Stuart street scene from their models of timber framed buildings. A fire was started in the baker's shop and pupils watched excitedly as the 'Great Fire of London' took hold on their school field. This led to some very thoughtful historical talk but was also used as a stimulus for creative writing. One pupil wrote about 'dancing flames which looked like they were waving at me' whilst another compared the flames to 'a dragon's fiery breath'.

The curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors to the school and by special weeks where the whole school works creatively on a theme such as 'Nature'. The school does not organise clubs although external agencies provide French, music and an after school club.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is good and contributes significantly to their good personal development and good progress. There are robust procedures for child protection and for assessing and dealing with risks. Health and safety matters are paramount and add to pupils' feelings of security. Pupils also feel safe because their concerns are taken seriously and they know who to turn to if they have a problem. As a parent commented, 'All the staff, from the headteacher to the dinner ladies, are helpful and friendly.'

Pupils' progress is tracked effectively and teachers use this information increasingly well to set targets for improvement for pupils. The school works well with specialist agencies to identify problems which pupils face and make sure they get the support they need. This means that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who are more vulnerable are well supported within school. As a result, they achieve the challenging targets in their individual education plans.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides effective leadership focused on maintaining good academic standards and promoting good standards of care for pupils. The school has addressed successfully the issues from the previous inspection. For example, the deputy headteacher and the senior teacher now contribute well to the leadership of the school. Similarly, teachers successfully evaluate and improve standards and provision in their areas of responsibility, although their role in monitoring the quality of teaching is underdeveloped. The successes of this team approach demonstrate the school's capacity to continue to improve.

The school evaluates itself well. Staff and governors share an accurate understanding of what needs to be improved and have clear procedures for checking on the progress that is being made. Governors are well informed. They maintain a good oversight of the school which helps ensure that the school's finances are managed well. The school works hard to keep parents informed. For example, they regularly seek the views of parents and display teachers' weekly planning so that all parents can see what their child is learning that week. Despite their best efforts, a recent reduction in the number of pupils to be admitted to the school and an increase in class sizes have been unsettling for parents. As a result, a few feel their views are not sufficiently taken into account. However, parents overwhelmingly agree that 'the school is well run and has a happy atmosphere'.

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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?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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

Pupils

We enjoyed meeting you and seeing how much you enjoy your work when we visited you recently. Like you and your parents, we think you go to a good school. Talking to you helped us to find out that:

* you learn a lot because your lessons are interesting and fun* you all get along well * your teachers and all the other adults take good care of you* everyone in the school works together
The headteacher, your teachers and all the governors have lots of good ideas about how they can make the school better. But they are always looking for more. We saw that you really enjoy helping the school. So we have asked them to think about more ways that you can help the school get even better. We have also asked them to watch how you learn in lessons to see if your work is always hard enough.

Although there was a lot happening at the school this week, we were pleased we could see some of the interesting things that you do. We were especially pleased that all that rain didn't put out the 'Great Fire of London'. Good luck with all the things that the school has planned for you to learn.

With best wishes

Ms Davies

Lead Inspector