



Calcot Infant School and Nursery

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109931
LEA West Berkshire LEA
Inspection number 278311
Inspection dates 6 July 2006 to 7 July 2006
Reporting inspector Derek Watts AI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Curtis Road
School category	Community		Calcot
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		Reading RG31 4XG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01189 418189
Number on roll	209	Fax number	01189 418189
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Suzi Bowyer
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Janet Jarivs (Acting Headteacher)

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3 to 7	6 July 2006 - 7 July 2006	278311

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Calcot is a smaller than average infant school. About 80% of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. Other ethnic groups represented include Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Caribbean and Chinese. A small but increasing number of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. Children start in the Nursery with knowledge and skills below those usually found. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was seconded to the local authority as an adviser and the deputy headteacher was the acting headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is good school where pupils' make good progress in their academic and personal development. The inspectors agree with the school's view that its overall effectiveness is good. Parents are very pleased with the education and care provided. Value for money is good.

Effective provision in the Nursery and Reception classes enables children to make good progress. This continues in Years 1 and 2. Standards in mathematics have been consistently above average and pupils achieve well. Effective action has been taken recently to raise achievement in writing and science. Pupils are now progressing well in these areas and standards are above average. Standards in reading have improved recently and are now slightly above average. Progress in reading is good.

Good teaching and a stimulating curriculum meet the needs of all pupils well. Provision and the quality of pupils' work in art are outstanding. There is good care, guidance and support for both pupils' academic and personal development. Effective assessment, particularly in writing, mathematics and science, means that the school knows how well individuals are progressing. Similar assessment procedures are being developed for reading.

Pupils enjoy lessons and the wide range of additional activities offered. They acquire a good range of basics skills and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Behaviour is good. Attendance is improving and is satisfactory.

Good leadership and management by the headteacher, acting headteacher and senior leaders contribute considerably to the successful outcomes for pupils. The school has a clear view of its performance and takes effective action to bring about improvements. Improvements since the last inspection are good and there is clear capacity for further growth.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the work of raising standards in reading so are they are in line with those of writing mathematics and science.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good overall and standards are above average. Children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills that are below those expected. Nursery and Reception children make good progress in all areas of learning because of good teaching, effective support and a stimulating curriculum. By the end of Reception, most children attain the expected learning goals.

In recent years, national test results for Year 2 have been broadly average in reading and writing, although there was a decline in writing in 2004. Standards in mathematics have generally been above average. These results indicate that pupils' progress has

been good in mathematics and satisfactory in reading and writing. The fall in writing standards was swiftly identified and effective action was taken to address it. Assessment and target setting for writing were improved and pupils were provided with a wider range of writing opportunities. Achievement in writing is now good and standards in the current Year 2 are above average. Pupils' progress in reading is good and standards are now a little above average. In mathematics, consistently good teaching and a focus on practical work lead to good progress and above average standards. Effective action has also been taken to raise achievement in science. Weaknesses in pupils' performance, such as the recording of data, have been remedied and regular assessments keep track of pupils' progress. Standards in science are above average and progress is good.

Good teaching, well targeted support and tasks being well matched to pupils' needs enable all groups to achieve well. Good provision for the able, gifted and talented is resulting in more pupils attaining above average standards. Pupils with learning difficulties are provided with effective support and those at an early stage of early English acquisition are given specific help so they have full access to the activities offered and effectively develop their language skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good and reflects the good care, guidance and support provided. Pupils enjoy their lessons and the many activities that enrich their school experience. Children make good progress in their personal and social skills in the Foundation Stage, often from a low starting point. Pupils develop self-confidence and good collaborative skills as a result of the good opportunities provided for them to become independent and to work with others. Pupils' behaviour is good and those who display challenging behaviour are well supported in their efforts to improve. Good basic skills and good social skills provide pupils with a good grounding for the next stage in their education. Pupils contribute well to the school community through the responsibilities they are given and they take these seriously. A playground buddy spoke proudly of his role in ensuring that 'everyone has someone to play with at lunchtime.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their cultural development is particularly well promoted by an excellent range of artistic activities. Pupils show a growing awareness of how to lead healthy lives. A Year 2 pupil remarked, 'You choose fruit over biscuits as a snack because fruit is better for you.' Attendance is satisfactory. There have been recent improvements due to rigorous checks on absences and working with parents and outside agencies to encourage good attendance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good with examples of outstanding practice in the Nursery and in Year 2. The high quality teaching contributes to pupils' good achievement. In the Foundation Stage, teachers and assistants provide a wide range of stimulating activities that inspire the children. Children acquire new knowledge and skills through a good blend of adult instruction and independent work.

Teachers are enthusiastic and plan lessons well. Interesting and stimulating learning resources motivate the pupils. Good opportunities for discussion develop pupils' speaking and listening skills well. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support teaching and learning in a range of subjects. Occasionally, however, lesson introductions are overlong and pupils' rate of learning slows. Tasks are well matched to pupils' attainment so all are suitably challenged. As a pupil commented, 'I like hard work'. Higher attainers are stretched with work requiring a deeper knowledge and understanding while those with learning difficulties receive effective support. Pupils at an early stage of English are well supported so they have full access to the activities and make good gains in acquiring language skills.

There are rigorous assessment and tracking procedures particularly in writing, mathematics and science. Assessment data is used very well by teachers to plan the next stages of pupils' learning and to set learning targets. There are clear plans to adopt a similar approach to the assessment of reading. The marking of pupils' work is effective and provides praise and clear guidance on how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A stimulating and varied curriculum promotes good achievement and good personal development. Pupils benefit from the well planned opportunities given to develop their skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT within other subjects. This has been particularly effective in improving pupils' writing skills. Recent work to improve reading is also starting to raise standards. Provision for art and design is outstanding. High quality, vibrant artwork pervades the school and adds to the attractive environment for learning. Themed weeks such as 'science and technology week' promote effective links between subjects as well as contributing to pupils' academic, social and cultural development. Pupils' design and technology models on display are good quality. Pupils learn to make healthy choices and to keep safe through an effective personal, social and health education programme. The curriculum is greatly enriched by activities such as French, country dancing and specialist provision for more able pupils. A good range of clubs, visits and visitors adds significantly to pupils' interests and enjoyment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, support and guidance are good. Pupils say they feel safe and secure because adults are caring and 'look after us really well'. There are robust procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' health and safety. Systems for assessing risks, especially on school trips, are rigorous.

Academic guidance to support pupils' learning is good. Teachers monitor the progress of individual pupils closely to set challenging targets for them. Pupils with learning difficulties are given good support by teaching assistants to achieve the targets in their individual learning plans. Pupils at the early stages of learning English are also well supported. Able, gifted and talented pupils are given good guidance which contributes to their good achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management contribute significantly to pupils' good progress and to their good personal development. The headteacher provides strong educational direction and the acting headteacher has led the school well in her absence. Both are firmly focused on raising pupils' achievement and developing high quality teaching and learning. A parent commented, 'Whether it is the headteacher or the acting headteacher in charge, this school is extremely well run'. Other leadership roles are distributed and developed well. Leadership of English, mathematics, science and ICT are effective.

Parents are very pleased with the school and give it good support. A parent remarked, 'I am extremely happy with the education and care my child receives'. Parents' views are sought and the school responds positively to their concerns and suggestions. For example, the school has increased the range of after school clubs and reviewed homework in response to parents' views.

School self-evaluation is good. The monitoring and development of teaching and learning are particularly effective. Strengths in the teaching are identified and supportive action is taken to remedy any shortcomings. As a result, teaching and learning are consistently good. However, the interpretation and explanation of pupils' results are not always sufficiently rigorous. Nevertheless, the school knows what it does well and takes effective action to bring about improvements. The raising of pupils' achievement in writing and science are recent examples. These successes show that the school has good capacity for further development and growth.

Governance is good. The governors are committed, supportive and well informed about the school's performance. Some are new to their role and are undergoing appropriate training. Statutory requirements are met.

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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	3	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	2	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	2	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

Children

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found out about your school. Calcot Infants is a good school and one you can be proud of.

* you enjoy school and take a keen interest in your work* the children in Nursery and Reception have settled well and are making good progress* you are making good progress in writing, mathematics and science * teaching is good and assistants help you. This is why you learn so much* your artwork is fantastic. So too are your DT models * you are polite, friendly and well behaved* you get on well with other children and adults* your headteacher and acting headteacher lead the school well and have worked hard to improve it. They receive good support from other staff* there is a good range of clubs and visits, which you tell us you enjoy* your parents are very pleased with the school and give it good support.

There is one important thing that we think could be improved:* some of you could reach higher standards in reading and your teachers will help you to make this happen.Finally, thank you once again for all your help. We wish you all the best in the future.

With kind regards

Derek Watts

Lead Inspector