



Iver Heath Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110279
LEA Buckinghamshire LEA
Inspection number 278399
Inspection dates 2 May 2006 to 3 May 2006
Reporting inspector Barbara Atcheson AI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	St Margaret's Close
School category	Community		Iver Heath
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		SL0 0DA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01753651382
Number on roll	228	Fax number	01753655135
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Jonathan Christie-Rundle
Date of previous inspection	8 May 2000	Headteacher	Ms V Canter

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most pupils from this average sized school have White British heritage and come from a range of backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and statements of need is above average. A lower number than average are eligible for free school meals. In 1998 the school changed from a middle school to its present junior school status. A department for language disorders was established in 1998. It currently caters for 11 pupils.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school provides a sound quality of education and satisfactory value for money. It also has many good features. One of the features of the school which parents appreciate most is the personal development of their children. Inspectors agree and judge this to be outstanding. Pupils are well cared for and a good curriculum supports their individual learning needs well. Pupils in the language disorders department are effectively integrated with the school.

Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. The school has effectively tackled issues of variations in pupils' attainment raised by their analysis of national tests and a local authority review. As a result achievement and standards are now rising. However the school recognises that more able pupils could do better.

Although teaching is satisfactory overall, there are examples of good and outstanding practice. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching by the senior leadership team are resulting in improvements. However, these improvements are not yet firmly embedded across the school.

Subject leaders have a clear view of their duties, though some have yet to develop their skills in monitoring and evaluation in order to improve standards in their subjects.

Governors are enthusiastic and hard working supporters of the school. However, some governors are not skilled enough in interpreting the school's performance data. This means that they are unable to monitor the school's effectiveness as well as they should.

The headteacher and senior leadership team have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have identified the correct courses of action to move the school forward, but recognise that much remains to be achieved. These well-considered plans and the thorough response to the issues raised by the last inspection show that the school has good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve target setting to ensure that all pupils with the potential to reach the highest levels do so.
- Further develop the monitoring and evaluation skills of subject coordinators in order to increase the impact that they have on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Enable governors to become more actively involved in assessing the school's needs.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory overall. In 2005 standards at the end of Year 6 were above average in science, broadly average in English but below in mathematics. More able pupils did not make enough progress.

School data indicates that recent initiatives together with improved teaching are beginning to raise standards. Standards at the end of Year 6 are now average in English

and above in mathematics and science. Progress is slow in Year 3 and satisfactory in Year 4. The best progress is seen in Years 5 and 6. The current Year 6 make expected progress in mathematics whilst a small minority are set to exceed expectations. The school recognises that more able pupils could do better. However indications are that in English, a recent more systematic and creative approach to writing is improving the rate of progress for all pupils, particularly the more able.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are effectively provided for and achieve in line with others. Parents of pupils in the school's department for language disorders praise the school's work with these pupils and cite examples of significant gains in their children's learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of pupils are outstanding. Pupils say they love school and enjoy learning. They value their inclusion in making decisions about all aspects of school life. Through the school council they are currently evaluating the quality of 'smoothies' as a healthy food. This illustrates their good commitment to a healthy lifestyle. Pupils show a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Satisfactory attendance reflects a period of sustained illness during winter months.

Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are courteous and eager to help others. Bullying is very rare, and is dealt with swiftly. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils regularly raise funds for charities. Racial harmony is promoted effectively through the study of cultures across subjects. Spiritual development is linked well to literature and religious education. Improving standards in English and mathematics contribute effectively to pupils' future economic well being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory with some good and some outstanding elements. There are already signs that initiatives introduced as a result of rigorous monitoring are resulting in improved teaching. As these are very recent they have yet to impact on pupils' achievement. Learning objectives are now identified and linked to success criteria which are used by pupils to assess their learning. However this has highlighted that success criteria for the more able pupils are not challenging enough in almost half of the lessons and there is a lack of challenge for more able pupils.

Where teaching is good, pupils benefit from a wide range of practical experiences, for example pupils in Year 3 enjoyed rising to the challenge as they used the large chess board in the playground to describe direction. However, where teaching is satisfactory the level of challenge is comfortable rather than demanding. As a result, progress is satisfactory, rather than rapid. In these lessons, a lack of practical activities means that learning does not capture the pupils' interest and motivate them to learn. Most

pupils with learning difficulties achieve in line with others because the targets set for them are clear and frequently reviewed. Teaching assistants work effectively to promote learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and supports individual learning needs well. Pupils are involved in planning exciting projects which promote effective learning. They say lessons are fun and value practical opportunities to learn through experience. For example, work on the Aztecs demonstrates how good links between subjects promote creativity and make learning relevant. The curriculum has been effectively reviewed and provision improved since the last inspection. The range of extra-curricular activities is good. Residential and local visits provide good starting points for projects and self-initiated learning. Pupils really enjoy their French lessons which prepare them well for secondary school. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved significantly since the last inspection.

Links between personal, social and health education, science and physical education promote healthy and safe lifestyles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The level of concern for the welfare of all pupils is good. There are effective links with support agencies. As a result, the school is a happy and secure place where pupils thrive. Great importance is placed upon the quality of relationships. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are quickly identified. They receive effective support and make good progress. Good liaison between the department and class teachers ensures a smooth transition for pupils with language disorders.

Procedures for child protection, risk assessment and health and safety are robust and staff training is fully up to date. Effective means of dealing with bullying and racism are in place and the number of recorded incidents is very low.

Pupils know their targets in literacy and numeracy and are supported well by staff and parents. Good transition arrangements between schools and classes prepare pupils well for change. The school has effective systems for monitoring the progress of all pupils. However this information is not always used effectively to plan the next steps in learning particularly for the more able pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory with some good features. The headteacher shows good leadership in her clear vision for improvement. This vision is shared by the senior leadership team. They understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. Under their guidance the school has made rapid improvement in response to their

analysis of national test results in 2005 and a recent local authority review. Recommendations have been implemented rigorously. School data indicates that this is already leading to improvement in the quality of education, and standards are rising. The school has successfully tackled the weaknesses from the last inspection. This is best illustrated by the significant improvement made in the provision for ICT. The school has a good capacity to improve.

Subject leaders have a clear view of their duties. Some have yet to learn the necessary skills that will enable them to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in their subject. Consequently this aspect of their work has yet to have an impact on improving standards. Improvements in teaching have been made as a result of the regular monitoring and evaluation by the senior leadership team, but more remains to be done to improve the challenge for more able and lift the quality of teaching in some areas. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well led and managed.

Financial management is good and resources are used well. Governance is satisfactory. Not all governors have the skills to analyse school data, but they are enthusiastic, hard working supporters of the school. They ensure that statutory requirements are met. The school is well supported by parents whose views are sought through formal questionnaires and good positive informal relationships.

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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?	3	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	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	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	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	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?	3	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	3	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

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn. Your school provides you with a sound education and has many good features.

We thought you would like to know what we liked about your school and how we thought it could get even better.* Your behaviour is outstanding. You are courteous and eager to help others. * There is very little bullying* You know your class rules and how to keep safe and stay healthy.* Your headteacher, teachers and teaching assistants work very hard to care for you, and everyone is valued.

These are the things that we have asked the school to make even better.* Teachers in charge of subjects are always looking for ways to help you learn more and we have asked them to do more of this in the future. * We have asked teachers to set harder targets for more able pupils* Ensure that all your governors know how to keep a check on how well you are doing.Thank you once again for looking after us so well on our visit. Mr Iles joins me in sending our very best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Barbara Atcheson

Additional Inspector