



Charlton Kings Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115737
LEA Gloucestershire
Inspection number 279667
Inspection dates 5 October 2005 to 6 October 2005
Reporting inspector Peter Way HMI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Lyefield Road East
School category	Foundation		Charlton Kings
Age range of pupils	4 to 7		Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL53 8AY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01242 514483
Number on roll	244	Fax number	01242 514483
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Julie Yates
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Judith Pandazis

Age group 4 to 7	Inspection dates 5 October 2005 - 6 October 2005	Inspection number 279667
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Charlton Kings Infant School occupies an attractive site with a mixture of new and older buildings. It includes a kindergarten unit which is being brought into the school's control. The majority of pupils come from localities with significant social advantage. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is about one quarter of the national average. The numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those whose first language is not English are both relatively low. The headteacher took up her post one year ago.

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 a good school in which pupils attain very high standards. It is very well led by the headteacher. Pupils enjoy coming to school. It has the overwhelming support of parents who made a large number of very positive comments to the inspection team.

It is a strength of the school and its staff that they are forward-looking and constantly embracing change in order to secure the best provision for the pupils. An interesting and broad curriculum encourages pupil enjoyment. It is enriched with many additional learning experiences and an excellent emphasis on creative activities. Pupils are well cared for. Very good provision in the Foundation Stage ensures that good progress is made. Recent initiatives include improvements to planning, assessment and the use of the outdoor area. Liaison with Year 1 and the kindergarten is being strengthened.

In a school where pupils reach such high standards there may seem to be little room for improvement but the school is aware that some pupils could be doing better. There has been a considerable amount of change during the past year. The inspection found that this is generally welcomed by staff and parents. Change is having a beneficial impact on the quality of teaching and learning, and on the educational environment. School self-evaluation has placed more emphasis on standards of attainment rather than pupils' progress, but there is a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Standards in information and communication technology are not yet as high as in other subjects, but good progress is now being made on this issue. The capacity to improve overall is very good and the school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- raise expectations of pupils' achievement through further analysis of performance information and learning needs;
- strengthen middle management through the development of the co-ordinators' role in monitoring and evaluating standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils attain very high standards at the end of Year 2. Their overall attainment has been consistently and significantly above the national average for the past five years. During this time standards have been exceptional in reading and sometimes also in writing. Mathematics, although also significantly above the national average, does not reach the same level of performance. The school is correctly focusing on the teaching of mathematical strategies and the ways in which pupils record their mathematics.

School leadership is beginning to analyse performance data more carefully to ensure that all pupils are making as much progress as they can. Although doing very well, the school has recognised that even more challenging targets could be set. This applies to some pupils in the middle ability group as well as some more able pupils. Those who

require more support and those with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress throughout the school.

When pupils start school they display a high level of attainment. Information from tests and observations is used to ensure that they make good progress through the Foundation Stage.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. The pupils are polite, considerate and courteous. They show respect for the school environment and are especially proud of their new playground equipment. They understand the importance of a healthy diet and the need for exercise. They enjoy coming to school and are interested in their work. Their ideas are taken into account and they feel valued. They are punctual and attendance is good. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils mix freely and work well in groups. This helps to develop confidence and self-esteem. In the Foundation Stage they feel secure and soon develop their confidence because of the very effective structure. They take turns and share equipment well.

The pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. All staff make good use of opportunities to reinforce the importance of social and moral issues. Assemblies are thoughtful, reflective occasions which also celebrate the pupils' successes. Pupils show respect and understanding for the feelings and beliefs of others but more emphasis is needed on the multicultural aspects of our society. Pupils are involved in community projects and are encouraged to think of the wider world and to improve the environment, for example, by recycling. The Year 2 'Eco Committee' is successful in helping to make improvements. Being concerned about the amount of plastic waste, they recycled plastic pots to plant flowers.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The standard of teaching is good. Lessons are clearly planned and the purpose of the work is shared with the pupils. Teachers remind pupils about things they have already done and tell them how this will help them to make progress with the new work.

Teaching assistants are used very effectively in all classes and pupils receive plenty of support during lessons. The school is trying to take account of different learning styles and this was seen during the inspection, especially in the more active involvement of pupils. A few lessons were too closely directed by the teacher.

Information on pupil performance is being collected regularly. Teachers are beginning to set better learning targets to help pupils know how to improve. There was good evidence of pupils being involved in this. It is not yet consistently applied across the school. Thought is put into the planning of each lesson and the needs of different groups of pupils. This ensures that learners make progress, but the school knows it

can develop this further. The school leadership is very clear about the improvements that can be made and has already begun work on this.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum enriched by a very good range of additional activities. Good attention is paid to physical development in addition to the emphasis on healthy eating, contributing to positive attitudes and well-being. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Planning over the longer term is effective, ensuring that new knowledge builds on what has previously been covered. There is a very good balance in the Foundation Stage between directed activities and those chosen by the pupils, including purposeful play; the curriculum is well planned for this age group.

The school has achieved the Artsmark gold award reflecting the importance put on this area of learning. The excellent range and standard of creative activities have a positive impact on the pupils' education. They talk excitedly about visits they have made and visitors who have been to the school. They greatly enjoy and appreciate the school clubs and activities at lunchtime and after school. Musical activities are well supported with many pupils having regular lessons, playing the recorder or singing in the choir. The provision for information and communication technology has improved with increased resources and training, although it is not yet used widely enough in all subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care for the pupils in the school is good. Pupils describe how they feel valued and appreciated and that teachers find time to listen to them. This promotes their self-confidence and has a positive impact on their achievement. Good provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Their needs are quickly assessed and good support has a positive impact on their progress. Learning targets have recently been introduced into lessons and are becoming part of established practice. The pupils have group targets for their learning in English and mathematics, although not all pupils are fully aware of these and the use of them is not yet consistent across the school.

Systems for health and safety and child protection are effective. The pupils feel secure and safe. Induction procedures for the youngest pupils are very thorough and they soon feel at home, able to enjoy what is on offer. Pupils in Year 2 are also very well prepared for the next stage of their education. The school works effectively with parents and outside agencies for the benefit of all pupils. Parents appreciate the 'Kids Club' provision before and after school and many take advantage of this facility. Parents agree that their children receive a good level of care at the school. They value the way in which they are kept well informed about their children's progress and well-being through regular newsletters and meetings with staff.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

School leadership is developing new strategies which are clearly focused on maintaining high standards. A number of changes during the last year have established more rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. This is beginning to have an impact on performance management, for example, for both teaching and support staff. Professional development receives a high priority and staff are forward-looking. Since her appointment last year the headteacher has provided clear direction and very good leadership. This is having an impact in many areas such as school self-evaluation, improvement planning and the use of performance data. Subject leaders are influential in planning and monitoring, but are not yet sufficiently focused on monitoring and improving pupils' progress.

A good standard is achieved in the care of pupils. They feel that they have the opportunity to be included in virtually all activities. Not all pupils have well-matched work in lessons. The school recognised this and introduced setting arrangements last year for mathematics in Year 2. It is too early to judge the impact of this but it shows how leadership is focused on meeting pupils' learning needs.

The governing body is well organised and provides good support to the school. Good links exist with staff and pupils and it is beginning to play a more major role in monitoring pupils' achievements. The chair's monthly newsletter is noteworthy for keeping governors fully informed. Staff appointment procedures are effective in bringing capable, enthusiastic teachers into the school. Resources are well managed. Investment in Information and Communication Technology equipment and stronger subject leadership will now enable teachers to teach ICT skills more effectively. Many refurbishments have been carried out over the last year and pupils respond well to the improvements in their environment.

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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	1	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	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	3	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

You may remember you recently had two visitors to your school. We sat in your lessons, talked to you about your work and talked to your teachers and helpers. We were trying to find out what your school is really good at. What are the things you really enjoy and what are the things which you could do better?

We found out that you enjoy coming to school. You get lots of help from your teachers and the other adults in your classes. You know all about being healthy and getting plenty of exercise. You work hard and most of you try to concentrate in your lessons. You really enjoy art and making things, you love music and you like taking part in clubs like the choir. You are really good at talking about the things which you like and you use interesting words. Your reading skills are very good. You are not always quite so good at maths - sums, numbers and things like that.

We also found some ways in which the teachers can help you to do even better in your work. We have suggested that they should give you more 'targets', things you have to learn - rather like a spelling test, but not necessarily words. Things like, '6 and 4 make 10, so do 7 and 3 - do you know all the pairs of numbers that make 10?' Some for maths, some for writing, some for reading. Subject leaders, like Mr Owens, will also take note of progress in their subjects. Oh yes, and keep practising your skills with computers and digital cameras and equipment like that.

Work hard at your targets and keep enjoying school. You are very lucky to go to a good school - that's what you told us and we agree.