



Allington Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118855
LEA Kent
Inspection number 280410
Inspection dates 19 October 2005 to 20 October 2005
Reporting inspector Ian Hartland HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hildenborough Crescent
School category	Foundation		London Road
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Maidstone, Kent ME16 0PG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01622 757350
Number on roll	277	Fax number	01622 766268
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Miss J Dolton
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2000	Headteacher	Mr Mark Geadah

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 19 October 2005 - 20 October 2005	Inspection number 280410
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is bigger than most primary schools. From September 2004 it grew to become a two-form entry school. Standards on entry are average. The proportion eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage with special educational needs is average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic communities is 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

Allington provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The school sees itself in this way and inspectors agree. Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. Pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 with standards that are above average. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make good progress in their learning. Pupils very much enjoy being at school and their behaviour is excellent. They have positive attitudes and feel safe and valued as individuals. Staff take very good care of pupils.

Teaching is good because teachers make lessons lively and interesting to ensure pupils learn. Procedures to involve pupils in assessing their own progress are more effective in some classes than others.

Leadership and management are good. The newly appointed headteacher has made a very good start, having taken appropriate action to bring about improvements. Senior staff have an accurate view of what the school does well and what needs to be improved. The evidence used to analyse pupils' progress does not yet include new measures which take into account contextual factors such as class size and eligibility for free school meals. Some aspects of subject leadership remain undeveloped.

Links with other organisations are used well to support pupils' learning and development. Parents hold the school in high regard and are very happy with what it offers. The school uses all resources well and provides good value for money. The school has improved well since the last inspection, having addressed all the suggestions for improvement. The school believes that it has a good capacity to improve further and inspectors agree.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure staff with subject responsibilities are enabled to monitor provision and standards in their subject more effectively and to use the findings to bring about improvements.
- Extend the range of evidence analysed about pupils' progress to include new measures which take into account contextual factors.
- Develop more consistent procedures for involving pupils in assessing their own progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school correctly takes much pride in the accomplishments of its pupils, who perform well by the time they leave the school. Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 are above average and they are well above average in writing. Pupils enter the junior part of the school with above-average attainment and maintain this standard through to the end of Year 6. The school has experienced some difficulty in meeting very ambitious statutory targets. Standards in science in Year 6 are well above average. The school has recognised the need to raise standards in reading for some more able pupils to enable them to achieve the higher levels. Children achieve well in the

Foundation Stage from their broadly average starting points to reach good standards by the end of the year.

Pupils make above-average progress in English, mathematics and science. The progress of more able pupils is good in these subjects, with more of them reaching higher levels of attainment than expected nationally by the time they leave the school. The school judges that pupils with special educational needs make good progress and inspection findings confirm this. Factors that have contributed significantly to this picture are the consistently good quality of teaching and, for pupils with learning difficulties, the well constructed plans for each of them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, with some aspects that are outstanding. Pupils are very proud of their school, and very much enjoy learning. Their attendance is well above the national average. Pupils behave extremely well in lessons and at other times of the school day. They are confident, sensible and responsible and they enjoy learning and working hard. They co-operate very well in lessons and in playground games and are alert to others' needs. Pupils of all ages are polite and friendly to each other and to adults and feel that the school is a very caring community. They are very aware of the importance of healthy living and of staying safe. They are very confident that the adults at the school will provide the help and guidance they need, both in lessons and in response to personal needs. For example, pupils feel that the occasional instances of bullying or other inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with firmly and fairly.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with an especial strength in their moral and social development. For example, in an assembly, the older pupils reflected thoughtfully on the implications of a Biblical story in terms of their own lives and on ways in which they seek to overcome difficulties. They are very clear about right and wrong and very much like the detention system introduced recently as they feel it is fair and constructive.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Consistently good teaching in the Foundation Stage gets children off to a flying start. They learn well through practical activities, investigation and play, and make good progress in acquiring early reading, writing and counting skills. In all classes, teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and achievement. This results in lessons that are well organised, purposeful and enjoyable for the pupils. Skilful and challenging questioning is another strong feature which promotes independent thinking. This was particularly effective in two outstanding mathematics lessons where the pace of learning and level of

challenge were very high and pupils made exceptionally good progress in calculating fractions of given quantities.

Teachers plan effectively to meet the needs of all pupils, whatever their capabilities. They use a wide range of procedures to assess pupils' attainment and record their progress. Although teachers set individual targets for all pupils, the school recognises that some methods involve pupils more effectively than others in evaluating their own progress. In some classes, for example, teachers are making very good use of a system with the colours of traffic lights to help pupils check their own progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy an interesting and stimulating curriculum which is enriched by a very good variety of additional activities. The curriculum is planned well to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and the higher-attaining pupils. When planning, teachers make meaningful links between subjects. For example, science and physical education both teach pupils about diet, exercise and good health. Art and music enjoy a high profile within the school and pupils benefit greatly from working with visiting artists and musicians. As teachers become more familiar with the computer suite, they are making more effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) in other subjects. The Foundation Stage curriculum achieves a very good balance between structured learning and play activities and teachers make very effective use of the outdoor area to extend children's learning. An opportunity to fire questions at a local politician, visits from a drugs workshop and trips into the local community all broaden pupils' experience of the world and help to prepare them to become responsible citizens. An excellent range of after-school clubs provides opportunities for pupils to enjoy sporting and musical activities as well as drama, design and technology and computing.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school makes good provision for pupils' care, guidance and support and safeguards its pupils well. Several aspects are excellent, including the newly-introduced detention system, as it makes the sanction into a constructive experience that encourages pupils to reflect on how to do better in future. The 'wind-down' activity led by class teachers in the last few minutes of the lunch break prepares pupils very well for learning in the afternoons.

Staff make their expectations of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and effort very clear and work successfully to create a positive ethos in which all pupils are enabled to flourish. This means that new pupils and those with particular needs are cared for very well. A number of approaches are used to promote health and safety issues successfully, including personal, social and health education sessions. Pupils' progress in learning is tracked and their individual needs are well known to all staff.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Earlier in the term the school judged leadership and management to be satisfactory because of the newness of the leadership team. However, inspection evidence now indicates that they are good. The school evaluates its work accurately and has initiated a wider involvement in the process. The school employs systems and data well to track progress but it has yet to use the latest information about pupils' progress to best effect. The school is beginning to take effective action to cope with the rapid and recent rise in the number of pupils.

The newly appointed headteacher has made a very good start, having refreshed the drive for improvement by taking a clear view of the direction the school should take. Staff said that he has given them 'a new lease of life'. A new and enthusiastic leadership team has been created. Appropriate actions have rapidly been introduced to address underdeveloped areas such as subject leadership, to allow those with responsibilities to monitor teaching and standards more effectively.

The governing body has ensured the school meets all its legal responsibilities, with governors playing an active and effective role in improving the work of the school. Governors possess the expertise to monitor effectively. Parental responses to a recent questionnaire are full of praise for the genuine care shown to their children and the progress they make at school.

Accommodation and resources are used well and managed effectively. The school provides good value for money. Good links with external agencies enrich and support the work of the school. The school has a good relationship with the local community. It is well placed for further improvement.

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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	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	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

I am writing on behalf of the team of inspectors who visited your school recently to let you know what we think about the school. Thank you for your help in talking to us about the work you do and telling us what you think about the school.

We think your school is a good school. We know you enjoy coming to school because you told us that teachers try hard to make lessons interesting so that you can learn more easily, and we saw this for ourselves. We believe that everyone in your school takes good care of you and you get on very well with each other. You told us that you feel safe and know that there is always someone to talk to if you have a problem. Teachers listen to what you say and the school council makes things happen.

We saw that you work hard in lessons and, as a result, you all do well, especially in the tests you take in Year 2 and Year 6. Your behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school. Your parents are very happy with the school and all that it provides for you, in and out of lessons. Your new headteacher has a lot of good ideas to make the school even better and to help you to learn more.

The school could do some things better. Firstly, teachers need to help you to become better at measuring your progress. Secondly, some teachers who look after subjects need to check on how well everybody in the school is getting on in their subject. Lastly, teachers need to use new information about your progress in the junior part of the school to help them understand better how well you are doing.