



Wincheap Foundation Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118867
LEA Kent
Inspection number 280415
Inspection dates 7 February 2006 to 8 February 2006
Reporting inspector Robin Thelwell AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hollow Lane
School category	Foundation		Canterbury
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Kent CT1 3SD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01227 464134
Number on roll	408	Fax number	01227 787360
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Alison Cogger
Date of previous inspection	4 October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Valerie Clough

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Situated just outside the centre of Canterbury, the school is much larger than most primary schools. When children start school, attainment is well below that expected for their age. One third of pupils claim free school meals. One tenth of pupils come from minority ethnic groups and two pupils receive support as they are at the early stages of learning English. Half the pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities and of these, 31 have statements of special educational needs. This is much higher than the national average. The school has a specialist unit for speech and communication disorders. The headteacher has been in post for just over a year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Wincheap Foundation Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education and sound value for money. These judgements reflect the school's view of its own effectiveness. Parents are happy with the school and pupils enjoy the many interesting activities provided. Pupils' behaviour is good and their overall personal development is satisfactory. Effective procedures are in place for child protection and health and safety.

The headteacher has quickly grasped where improvements are required, and has already achieved good results in several aspects of the school's work. Over the last five years, standards have continued to rise. Achievement is sound overall and, at the end of Year 6, attainment is average in English, mathematics and science. However, pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not make enough progress in writing. Provision in Reception is satisfactory and children make steady gains in learning. Effective support given to pupils with speech and communication disorders enables them to make good progress. Provision for those with learning difficulties and disabilities, and for pupils at the early stages of learning English, is satisfactory.

Teaching is satisfactory overall and is supported by effective links with nearby schools and outside agencies. However, not enough use is made of assessment information to help teachers plan lessons that meet all pupils' learning needs. Pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum enriched by a good range of out-of-class activities. Although still unsatisfactory, the rate of attendance is improving. Whilst leadership and management are satisfactory, the headteacher gives strong leadership and is now working with subject leaders to develop their role in monitoring teaching and learning in subjects for which they are responsible. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by ensuring that basic skills, such as handwriting, spelling and punctuation, are more securely established by the end of Year 2.
- Make better use of assessment information to promote the best possible learning for all pupils.
- Develop the role of subject leaders in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the subjects for which they are responsible.
- Work with parents and carers to improve pupils' rate of attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter Reception with skills and knowledge that are well below levels expected. Although children make steady progress, standards remain much lower than usual by the time they join Year 1. This is due to pupils having limited speaking and listening skills.

Achievement across the school is satisfactory, although it varies from year to year. It is best at the upper end of the school and sometimes insufficient in Years 1 and 2. This is because a few pupils do not make enough progress in their writing skills.

Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds make steady progress, as do those learning English as an additional language. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress. Pupils who attend the 'Communication Unit' make good progress. Here, assessment systems are rigorous and highly effective in supporting pupils' learning. In other parts of the school, pupils' progress is not well enough tracked and teachers do not use assessment information effectively enough to enhance pupils' learning.

By Year 6, standards are average, with good challenges for higher-ability pupils in English. Although standards fell in mathematics in 2005, they are now average and reflect the drive to improve numeracy and problem solving.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory overall. Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. Behaviour is good and there is racial harmony. The emphasis given to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helps learners develop a sensitive approach to life and everyday issues, and to appreciate the achievement of others. Pupils feel they are safe and well cared for. They say bullying is rare and that adults deal with any bad behaviour quickly and fairly. Although attendance is not yet satisfactory, the school is working successfully to improve the situation.

Pupils contribute well to the school and local community. They know their opinions are listened to and express trust in the adults in school. The school council makes a useful contribution to the day-to-day life of the school and ensures pupils' views are well represented. Through fund raising for a range of charities and good causes, pupils gain a sound understanding of wider social and economic issues, together with an appreciation of those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils have a good awareness of the importance of safety, regular exercise and healthy eating. They enjoy the 'fresh fruit' scheme, and the take-up of sporting activities beyond the school day is good. In order to develop further this aspect of provision, the school is now participating in a 'Healthy School' project.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have good relationships with pupils. At the start of lessons, teachers explain clearly what pupils are going to learn. In many classes information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively to enhance pupils' learning. Teaching assistants are well trained and support learning effectively

in lessons. In many lessons, teaching is lively and interesting, and pupils want to do well. At the end of a numeracy lesson, pupils said "Oh, no" when they were told to stop work. Learning in the Reception Year is satisfactory. Children learn well through investigative activities but opportunities are missed to develop their speaking skills. Teaching and assessment in the speech and language unit are good and pupils receive effective support. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified accurately and they make satisfactory progress. A range of appropriate opportunities is provided to extend the learning of pupils with particular gifts and talents. Teachers do not always ensure that pupils listen to each other and do not check that they are fully involved. Teachers now gather good information on how well each pupil is progressing. However, they are not yet making good use of the information to enhance pupils' learning. This is particularly apparent in Years 1 and 2. The school has already identified this as an area for development and is taking steps to ensure assessment is used more effectively to support teaching and learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum and pupils spoke with much enthusiasm about the things they do, particularly art and ICT. Following a review of the curriculum, subjects are now linked meaningfully. The school has gained awards for its participation in sports and the arts and pupils are provided with good opportunities to work with an artist in residence. Older pupils benefit from being taught French. Pupils' ICT skills are developed systematically and applied well throughout the curriculum. Special events weeks, visits and visitors enhance the curriculum further. Good initiatives are in place to promote healthy lifestyles, such as the fresh fruit scheme and the 'Healthy School' award. A wide range of clubs is held at lunchtimes and after school. These are well attended and include sports activities, drama, music and art.

Residential visits for older pupils provide good opportunities to take part in outdoor activities and develop their abilities to work as part of a team and develop self-confidence.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The welfare of learners contributes satisfactorily to pupils' enjoyment of school and positive attitudes to learning. The school values the views of pupils and parents, which it gathers and uses to help improve provision. Procedures for child protection are good and pupils work in a safe environment. Safety checks are undertaken regularly, and risk assessments are carried out before pupils go on visits. The importance the school gives to promoting healthy lifestyles effectively shapes pupils' attitudes to health, diet and physical activities.

In class, pupils receive much encouragement and support from teachers and teaching assistants. However, marking of work in pupils' books does not always give enough guidance as to how it can be improved, and not enough use is made of assessment procedures to monitor and track pupil progress in order to set targets for learning.

Pupils are given good support and guidance in the unit for speech and communication, resulting in them making good progress. All staff give satisfactory support and guidance to pupils at the early stages of learning English, or those who have learning, behavioural or emotional needs.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new headteacher has a clear vision and drive for improvement and is bringing about rigorous changes to management systems. As a result, staff are working together as a team and pupils and parents are actively involved in the improvement process. Managers are beginning to take on greater responsibility for evaluating the school's performance and to improve assessment. However, evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning in lessons and managers' understanding about standards are underdeveloped.

Overall, the school has evaluated its performance satisfactorily. The improvement plan contains many useful points, especially about how to improve assessment. Strengths of leadership include the focus on personal and social development and recent improvement in the curriculum. Furthermore, the improved standards in science and greater challenges for higher-ability pupils in English by Year 6 show the school's commitment to improving standards. Effective management in the 'Communication Unit' has led to improvements in overall provision since the last inspection.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors have improved the ways they evaluate the school's work and are proud of the school's strengths, while being clear about the areas for development. They are becoming increasingly confident in challenging and holding the school to account. Finances are managed well.

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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	3	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?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	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	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?	3	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	3	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	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	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

Thank you very much for making us welcome when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed coming into your lessons and looking at your work. We especially enjoyed talking to some of you about your school.

These are some of the things we are most pleased about:

- You enjoy school, work hard in lessons, and are willing to learn.
- You behave well, get on well with each other, and are polite and helpful to visitors.
- All the adults in school look after you and help you to feel safe and keep healthy.
- You enjoy the interesting work your teachers give you.
- That you really appreciate all the extra opportunities the school gives you, especially visits.
- The way in which your headteacher, staff and school governors are trying to make the school even better.

To make sure the school keeps improving, we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to do the following:

- Help some of you in Years 1 and 2 to improve your writing skills.
- Keep a closer check on how well each of you is doing, so they can make sure the work they give you is just right. Not too easy and not too hard.
- Find ways in which teachers can help your headteacher by taking charge of the different subjects that you learn.
- Work with your parents to improve your attendance.