



Oaklands Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101637
Local Authority Bromley
Inspection number 286133
Inspection date 22 February 2007
Reporting inspector Marianne Harris

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Norheads Lane
School category	Community		Biggin Hill
Age range of pupils	4-7		Westerham TN16 3XH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01959 574609
Number on roll (school)	147	Fax number	01959 575340
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Steven Mercer
		Headteacher	Mrs Anne Smith
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small infant school in a semi-rural setting. Most of the pupils come from the local area and are predominantly of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below that normally found. The school roll has fallen over the last few years due to the relocation of children from Ministry of Defence housing, and a fall in the birth rate that also has affected other local schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

One parent described this as 'a first rate school' and that is exactly what it is. From relatively low starting points pupils make outstanding progress because teaching and learning are excellent throughout the school and pupils' personal development is extremely good. Children get off to a flying start in the Reception classes and by the end of Year 2 standards are very high. Children really enjoy coming to school and learn all of the skills they need for their next stage of education. They are confident and friendly, polite and considerate.

The leadership and management of the school are excellent, and have been especially successful in maintaining very high standards. The emphasis on helping the pupils to learn about healthy and safe living means that the pupils fully understand the need to keep safe and eat sensibly. The school council has been instrumental in bringing about changes within the school and the very fact that they meet in the staff room means that the members see their views as being important. Attendance is above that normally seen in infant schools, but there are a few families who keep their children away from school for trivial reasons.

The school puts great store by developing each child to their full potential, both academically and personally. Consequently excellent care is provided for each child and they are very well guided throughout their time in the school. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils and there are excellent relationships throughout the school. Work is very well planned so that it is interesting and fun, and the progress each pupil makes is carefully tracked so that targets are set and reviewed regularly. Marking helps pupils know what to do next to improve their work and pupils themselves are involved in this process. There is a great deal of curriculum enrichment in the form of visits and visitors into school. Pupils can recall many of the visits they have been on, for example they explained carefully about the differences in the farms they had visited. There is a wider range of clubs than is normally seen in an infant school with many having a waiting list.

The governors work closely with the headteacher and staff to make sure that standards are maintained. They are currently working on providing extended out of school care, and have asked very searching questions as to how it will benefit the local community. There is excellent capacity to improve further as all staff are constantly reviewing provision and have not sat back after the last, very positive, inspection. The very high standards reported last time have been maintained, provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved tremendously and children continue to thrive at this school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Work closely with parents so that all pupils attend regularly in order that they achieve as well as they can.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children begin school with standards that are below average, although these do fluctuate from year to year. During their time in the Reception class, children make excellent progress and most reach or excel the standards normally expected for children aged five. This excellent progress continues throughout Years 1 and 2 and standards are significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave to join their next school. These high standards are confirmed by the school's own data and lesson observations. This outstanding achievement has been a characteristic of the school in the recent past and the school is very successful in ensuring that all pupils achieve exceptionally well, whatever their ability.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school council plays a major role in shaping school life and is justly proud of their contribution to improving the toilets and providing a 'friendship bench' in the playground where pupils can go at playtime if they have no-one to play with. They know that someone will come and play with them and they are not lonely for long. Behaviour is exemplary in lessons and around the school. Pupils report that very few misbehave and that adults quickly sort out any problems. There is an exceptionally good understanding of how to be healthy because the school encourages pupils to drink plenty of water and to eat fruit. Pupils themselves report that this is because it keeps you healthy and helps you learn. They really enjoy coming to school because they say that learning is fun and they have lots of friends. Pupils are proud of their fund raising efforts for others. They willingly take on responsibilities within the school and develop a great deal of confidence when talking to adults. They are very well equipped with the skills they will need in later life, including how to keep safe.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Pupils make such good progress because teaching is of a consistently very high standard. All lessons are very carefully planned so that pupils can systematically learn the skills they need for later life. The teaching of letter sounds is particularly outstanding because sessions are short and sharp and pupils learn to use their skills to read and write correctly. Learning is fun and very good use is made of the interactive whiteboards so that all pupils can be involved in lessons. Excellent relationships exist between staff and pupils and teachers have very high expectations that pupils will achieve as well as they can. This makes a significant contribution to both personal development and the outstanding progress that pupils make.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides an excellent curriculum that is enriched with outstanding opportunities for pupils to learn outside of lessons. The school council speaks very highly of the gardening club and the choir that sings at Christmas time. They also praise the special weeks, where they learn how to care for the environment and enjoy theatre presentations. The programme for promoting pupils' personal development is excellent and gives pupils an outstanding understanding about getting along together, keeping safe and helping those less fortunate than themselves.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school takes extremely good care of its pupils. Every step is taken to ensure that children are safe and the school is very welcoming. Child protection systems are robust and many staff are trained in first aid. Teachers set realistic targets for pupils so that their progress can be tracked very effectively and appropriate support put in place if anyone falls behind. Pupils themselves report that they know what their targets are and confidently assess for themselves how well they are doing. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are very well supported and targets are set for them so that they achieve as well as they can.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. All staff and governors realise that the challenge they face is to maintain very high standards. They have been very successful in this, yet strive to improve things further. Since the current headteacher took over there has been great improvements in ICT and interactive whiteboards are very well used in classes. There is very good use of outside agencies to help pupils and their families to learn together, and the school is looking to extend their provision further. The governing body provides very good strategic leadership. It is very supportive of the school and asks searching questions about the standards reached by pupils. They actively plan for replacing governors when one retires or resigns and this makes a significant contribution to the very good running of the school. The skills and interests of every member of staff are used effectively so that the excellent provision can be maintained. The school has drawn up a very good development plan to help them improve further. This is because the school knows where it wants to improve. Staff work extremely well as a team to make sure that all pupils achieve as well as they can.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for welcoming me into your excellent school a few days ago. I had such a lovely time and am now writing to let you know what I found out.

I think that you all make excellent progress because your teachers plan work for you that you find interesting and fun. You learn all the skills you need for your next school. I was particularly impressed with your understanding about healthy eating and the contribution that you have made to your own school. The school council told me how proud they were of the friendship bench and said that no-one need be lonely in the playground. I know that you really enjoy being in school and you all behave really well. You are all polite and friendly and get on very well together. Most of you come to school regularly, but there are a few of you who stay away from school without a good reason. I have asked your teachers to work closely with your mums and dads to make sure that you all attend when you are well enough.

Once again thank you very much for being so friendly when I came to your school. I wish you all good luck in the future.

Marianne HarrisLead Inspector