

# Coombe Hill Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102576
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kingston Upon Thames
<b>Inspection number</b>	286429
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christopher Gray

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	360
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Anne Davis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Chris Hodges
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 November 2001
<b>School address</b>	Coombe Lane West Kingston Upon Thames KT2 7DD
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8949 1743
<b>Fax number</b>	00

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school has changed from two-form entry to three since the last inspection and is now bigger than average. Pupils now come from a wider spread of social and cultural backgrounds than previously and their socio-economic circumstances are broadly average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher than usually found in schools, though the number at the early stages of learning English is small. Pupils begin in Year 3 with above average standards of attainment. The school holds the following awards: Basic Skills, NAACE Mark, ICT, Arts Mark, Green School Bronze, and Healthy Schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school which gives its pupils an excellent standard of education. They reach high standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT), showing outstanding achievement from their starting points. One parent wrote to say, 'Coombe Hill is a wonderful school and I am delighted with the high level of independence which is fostered, so that the children gain a real sense of learning for themselves.'

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their behaviour is excellent and they are eager to learn. Lessons are remarkable for the high level of concentration shown by pupils. They take responsibility for their own learning and work hard in thinking, speaking and writing. Pupils in Year 6 were discussing the pros and cons of school uniform. One person wrote in a very mature style: 'School uniform helps to emphasise the point that we are all a community and are all equal.' Pupils are learning to mark each other's work, pointing out good features and those that might be developed. This is something the school is keen to extend.

Teaching and the curriculum are outstanding because lessons are geared to pupils' abilities and interests. A Year 5 literacy lesson on figurative speech took a poem as its starting point. Higher attaining pupils had to highlight examples of simile, metaphor and personification; lower attaining pupils used a thesaurus to find synonyms for some of the poet's words. The lesson captivated pupils because, in the poem, a river described its journey into pollution. This is close to pupils' hearts, as is seen in the work of the Green Team. They are keen to stop waste of water and electricity and have made suggestions as to how the school might help. This demonstrates their growing sense of social responsibility. One parent wrote to say, 'The school gives plenty of opportunities to develop their social skills' and this can be seen clearly in pupils' attitudes.

Another parent commented, 'The school promotes a happy, safe learning environment'. This is because the quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. Pupils feel safe in school and those with problems or disagreements can receive help from a number of quarters. First are the peer mediators, whose effectiveness in sorting out minor differences was spoken of by many pupils. Failing that, all pupils spoken to were adamant that all adults in the school would be able to sort things out. Pupils' academic success is built not only on their own hard work but also on the school's exemplary use of assessment data to make sure that pupils are on track to reach their full potential.

Outstanding leadership and management are the foundation of this success, and all staff participate in this. One parent encapsulated this: 'Excellent school, very good teachers and hard-working headmaster'.

### What the school should do to improve further

There are no major issues to address because of the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation. The following issue is a chief priority in the current school development plan:

- Develop pupils' ability to assess their own and each other's work, in order to help them see for themselves how it could be better.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. They begin in Year 3 with above average attainment and reach high standards in English, mathematics and science by Year 6. Standards in ICT are well beyond expectations. Tracking data show that pupils throughout the school continue to achieve exceptionally well. The measure of pupils' progress in 2006 was in the top three per cent of schools nationally. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve equally well. Very thorough tracking of the progress made by pupils with learning difficulties ensures that the help they receive is closely tailored to their needs and this helps them to make outstanding progress.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They enjoy school enormously, especially the wide range of activities available, such as the club which is making a film to be shown at the National Film Theatre. Their attendance is above average. Pupils say that there is little bullying and are confident that any occurrences would be well dealt with. They know about healthy eating and take exceptional amounts of exercise. The whole school takes part in aerobics every morning in the playground at 8.45.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their behaviour is excellent. They understand that 'most rules make you safe'. One person summed up the school's rules in these words: 'Be friendly and include everyone'. Pupils value different views and opinions; as one said, 'Don't just think your ideas are better than everyone else's.' They are convinced of the value of the school council: 'The school involves us and our ideas so we feel part of it'. These skills and high standards in academic subjects form an excellent basis for future learning.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding because teachers enjoy teaching and pupils enjoy learning. This was obvious in a Year 6 dance lesson, where pupils were performing the Haka, a traditional Maori dance. Pupils' steps and actions were well coordinated and the end product stunning, with its blood-curdling yells, because of the excellence of teaching and pupils' attitudes. Pupils reach high standards because teaching in the four sets for English and mathematics in every year group is well planned and meets pupils' needs very well. Modern technology is used as much as possible. Teachers make the most of interactive whiteboards, pupils learn to touch type and those who write slowly use special software to help record their ideas.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. One parent wrote, 'The school offers a wide range of after-school activities and actively promotes a health and fitness regime'. Another observed of her child, 'The school has been excellent in making sure that both in the curriculum and socially he is fully included.' Pupils' personal development is thoughtfully nurtured through a well planned

curriculum, which gives them plenty of opportunities to explore their thinking as well as to take on responsibilities. Many visits to places of interest take place, such as to the 'Mary Rose', specially remembered by one pupil because 'the coach broke down on the way back'. Outstanding provision for literacy, numeracy, science and ICT enable pupils to reach high standards.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The care, guidance and support offered to pupils are outstanding. All statutory requirements regarding child protection are fully met and augmented. For example, the group of schools to which the school belongs funds a counsellor, whose work has had good effect on the attendance and achievement of individuals.

Pupils' academic development is exceptionally good because of the outstanding systems for tracking their progress. These are used consistently by all staff and are carried out frequently, following an agreed schedule, so that no pupil is permitted to fall behind for long. Pupils themselves are involved in assessing themselves and each other. This is something they enjoy and approach in a mature way. The school is working to make this an even more effective tool in helping pupils to be responsible for their own learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher is crystal clear about where he wants the school to go and this vision is shared by all staff and governors. His outstanding leadership is mirrored by that of other senior managers. They have devolved important responsibilities, such as accountability for pupils' performance, to middle managers and class teachers, so that the whole school works as a highly efficient team. Self-evaluation is painstaking and thoroughly effective. It is founded on a tight schedule of checking and analysing pupils' progress, which results in consistent, high standards in core subjects. The school is expanding the services it offers, in line with local authority policy. The high level of governors' involvement and the challenging questions they ask are ensuring that this will not interfere with the outstanding quality of education that the school offers. This was demonstrated by the recent, highly successful change to three-form entry. The continuation of high standards during this period shows that the school has an outstanding capacity to continue to improve.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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**

When I visited your school before Easter, I promised you that I would write a report in which some of you might recognise some of the things you told me. I wonder if you have found them. I really enjoyed my day with you because you and all the adults were so welcoming and friendly. Thank you all very much.

Many of your parents wrote to tell me how good your school is and you told me the same story. I agree: your school is outstanding. Your hard work and the excellent teaching you receive enable you to reach high standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The progress you make is amongst the best made by children all over the country.

I hope many of you will read my report. It is not very long and you will see there many of the things that I remember about your school - not just the lessons, but the clubs and other things we talked about. You are lucky to have so many interesting things to learn and such a lovely environment to work in. The school council is helping to improve your surroundings and I know that the governors take their ideas seriously, because they give them money to turn their ideas into reality.

You are also keen on keeping fit and eating healthy food, though you know that a balanced diet allows you some treats. Your behaviour is excellent and you show a sense of responsibility to others, such as Peer Mediators and the Green Team. The adults make sure you are safe and happy and you told me how they can always sort out any problems.

Your headteacher is an excellent leader. He and the staff work extremely hard to make the school the success it is. Because the school's leaders are so good at spotting where things need to be changed, I have no important alterations to recommend. We have agreed that an area to develop is your skills in looking at your own and others' work to see where it might be improved.

Well done to all of you.

Yours sincerely

Christopher GrayInspector