

Cheam Park Farm Infants' School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102966
Local Authority	Sutton
Inspection number	286537
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2007
Reporting inspector	John Horwood

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	367
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr P Cook
Headteacher	Mrs A Day
Date of previous school inspection	24 September 2001
School address	Molesey Drive North Cheam Sutton SM3 9UU
Telephone number	020 8644 7415
Fax number	020 8255 5532

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a very large infants' school which is consistently oversubscribed. About half of the main school pupils have previously attended the school's Nursery class. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few are at the early stages of speaking English. The profile of the school is, however, changing with an increasing number of pupils speaking other languages. Currently about 16% of pupils come from minority ethnic groups, many having an Asian background. Most pupils come from families whose social circumstances are more favourable than average and the proportion of pupils taking free school meals is consequently below average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties or statements of special educational needs is also below average. There have been a number of recent staff changes including the appointment of a new headteacher in January 2007.

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 with outstanding features. Central to the success of the school is the commitment to supporting every child by raising standards and meeting their individual needs whilst reflecting on and improving practice. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and clearly focused on identified areas for development, such as improving literacy lessons to raise the enjoyment for boys. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school which 'goes that extra mile in all aspects'.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children entering the Nursery are at expected levels of attainment and make good progress to be above expected levels when they leave. Good progress continues and, by the end of Year 2 pupils have achieved above average standards. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities also make good progress as a result of the good support they are given. Parents identify that 'they have been delighted with the school input to supporting pupils with speech and language difficulties'. The increasing number of minority ethnic pupils within the school are well supported and make good progress.

The above average standards and good progress result from good teaching, with interesting and, often, exciting lessons with good use made of information and communication technology (ICT) to motivate pupils. All teachers use question and answer sessions well to ensure pupils have understood what they have been taught. Opportunities are not always taken to ask 'open-ended' questions which allow more discussion leading to greater learning. The curriculum is good with outstanding enrichment opportunities available through a range of after school activities. Links between subjects are not always systematically developed across the school and this sometimes limits the opportunities pupils have to undertake more active and creative tasks which would extend their learning. The personal development and well-being of pupils are outstanding as are the aspects of care that support this. They are mature and sensible, have excellent attitudes to learning and they demonstrate outstanding behaviour and relationships, ensuring all pupils can learn whilst feeling safe and secure. This creates what one parent described as 'a lovely, happy and friendly environment'. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and this is reflected by the racial harmony within the school.

Teachers mark work regularly and give good advice. However, teachers do not have access to easy-to-use data from the assessment systems, which would help them provide work that takes more account of their capabilities and ensure that all pupils are challenged and achieve as much as they are able to.

Good leadership and management ensured that the school has maintained good standards whilst it has increased in size and the profile of children joining the school has become more complex. The school has dealt with the minor issues identified in the previous inspection report. The collaborative approach of the headteacher has already developed an effective and enthusiastic team which has a good capacity to help the school improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all staff make the most of opportunities to extend pupils' learning.
- Rationalise current assessment systems to provide easy to access information to demonstrate pupils' progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

All pupils achieve well as they progress through the school and reach standards that are above the national average. When they enter Nursery they are of average ability being better at mathematical and physical skills but weaker in literacy. Good teaching within a well organised and caring environment ensures that good progress is maintained throughout the school. As a result of a specific funded focus last year, a group of Asian pupils made exceptional progress in mathematics and the techniques used have now been introduced into the scheme of work. Currently observation and school records show that all pupils are making the same progress in all subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve lower than national standards but are in fact making good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They make impressive gains in developing their confidence, independence and social skills with an excellent start being made in the Nursery. Pupils of all ages thoroughly enjoy school, have extremely positive attitudes and are proud of all it has to offer. A particularly noticeable feature is the pupils' sense of belonging and loyalty to their school. Attendance is good and pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils develop an excellent understanding of healthy eating and can explain the importance of being safety conscious. They take on responsibilities extremely well and make a strong contribution to both the school and the wider community for example, when helping to tackle environmental issues in the surrounding area. Pupils are well prepared for their future economic-well being, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They develop a strong sense of right and what is wrong based on the school's Golden Rules. Comments added to the School's Friendship Tree show that they really appreciate the importance of 'respect, a smile and a hug' if their friend is unhappy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are consistently good and are sometimes outstanding. In the better lessons pupils have more opportunities for discussions as a result of more 'open' questions and have more opportunity for active and creative tasks. The lessons are well planned and include a good variety of activities to make them enjoyable whilst making full use of the resources available in the classroom. All groups of pupils make good progress in lessons. In the Foundation Stage the teachers quickly assess the pupils' needs and provide a suitable and engaging curriculum. In other classes teachers generally match the work to pupils' ability so that they make good progress. Assessment systems, however, are not yet sufficiently developed to provide data to class teachers in an easy-to-use form to enable them to always monitor progress and set appropriate work for individual pupils. This results in inconsistent use of data and sometimes work may be too easy or difficult. Pupils' positive attitudes and outstanding behaviour ensure that all are able to learn effectively in all lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is outstanding in the Nursery where children learn quickly to become independent and play is used well to help them become enthusiastic learners. It is good in the main school where it is broad, balanced and there is good emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy. 'Thematic' weeks, such as the recent science week, add considerably to pupils' enjoyment and give them the opportunity to work in depth in a particular area. ICT is used well to support learning and pupils have good opportunities in many lessons to apply their skills in different areas of work.

The personal, social and health education provision helps pupils to settle in well to school and learn how to cope with changes. Good links with the neighbouring secondary school enhance the good provision for physical education. Frequent trips and visits enrich the curriculum considerably and pupil participation in these is high. There is a good range of after school clubs that are very popular with pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Overall, the quality of care, guidance and support is good.

Pupils are given outstanding support for their personal development and their care. All staff put the pupils' needs first and show a high level of respect towards them. Relationships are excellent and, from the moment children start school, they make significant improvements in developing their confidence and independence. The school's very strong links with parents, feeder pre-school groups and the receiving junior school help to ensure that there is smooth transition at crucial points in the pupils' education. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are rigorous and robust and, as a result, pupils work in a safe and secure environment where they make comments such as 'the teachers will help us if we have a problem'.

The support and guidance for pupils' academic development is generally good. Staff assess the progress pupils make carefully and conscientiously, and they use this information to set targets that are well matched to individual pupils' levels of understanding. There is, however, some inconsistency in the extent to which these are used to help pupils appreciate how they might improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has established good relationships with all staff and they work together to raise standards. Results are analysed, minor trends are identified and remedial action taken. Teaching observations are carried out regularly and the accuracy of these was confirmed by comparing judgements with observations made during the inspection. The format of the observation sheets does not encourage the observer to focus on why the learning was as it was. Professional development opportunities for teaching staff, aimed at raising standards, and for administration staff are outstanding whilst those for teaching assistants are developing well. Managers at all levels are actively involved in the monitoring processes but data is not yet sufficiently and consistently used to raise standards. Governors fulfil their roles well and

are fully aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. The financial management is good.

The changing cohort has been well managed by the school. Above average standards have been maintained even though the cohort has become more mixed in its ability. The few minor issues from the previous report have been addressed. Overall this represents good progress since the last inspection and shows that the school has good capacity 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>	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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

23 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Cheam Park Farm Infants' School, Sutton, SM3 9UU

Thank you very much for helping us with the inspection when we came to your school. We all enjoyed talking with you and coming into your lessons to see how much you were enjoying them.

We think your school is a good school and can see why you like it. You are all making good progress with your learning, behave very well and are looked after really well by the adults in the school. Your teachers give you a lot of help in lessons and the school is well led by your headteacher and the governing body. You told us that you know how to keep yourself safe and what you should eat to keep healthy. It was good that you enjoy the things the school provides for you outside of lessons.

We have asked the school to improve two things. We have asked the teachers to help you learn a little more in lessons by giving you the chance to discuss the answers to questions in more detail. We have also asked the headteacher to try and provide teachers with better information about your progress so that it is easier for them to help you make even more progress. You can help them with this by carrying on working really hard.

Thank you once again. We wish you and your families well for the future and hope that you enjoy the rest of your education.

John Horwood Lead Inspector