

New Scotland Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109883
Local Authority	Bracknell Forest
Inspection number	288519
Inspection date	29 June 2007
Reporting inspector	George Rayner

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jack Delbridge
Headteacher	Mrs Pat Kerton
Date of previous school inspection	28 January 2002
School address	Grampian Road Sandhurst GU47 8NQ
Telephone number	01344 772184
Fax number	01344 750561

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This school is similar in size to other primary schools. Pupils' socio- economic circumstances are favourable. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and none are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The headteacher has been in post since the start of the current term.

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. Parents agree. Most say that their children are happy here and that they make good progress. The school is committed to providing an environment in which all pupils can develop well, academically, emotionally and personally. It demonstrates this commitment in its good care, guidance and support. Its effectiveness is demonstrated by pupils' good personal development and well-being. Pupils show their enjoyment of school through their above average attendance, the very good behaviour of most and their willingness to join in with all that it has to offer. Pupils know how to eat and drink healthily and they participate enthusiastically in opportunities for physical exercise. They say that they feel secure and know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils develop good spiritual, moral and social awareness. They also learn well about their own culture through for example, their regular involvement in local ceremonies and celebrations. Their understanding of how people live in other cultures, while satisfactory, is weaker.

Good teaching and learning, supported by a good curriculum, lead to good achievement for pupils. When children enter the Foundation Stage their standards generally match expectations for their age. They improve to be above average by the end of Year 6. Because of good provision in the Foundation Stage, children make good progress there. They quickly develop good learning habits and have established a strong foundation for their further learning when they enter Year 1. In Years 1 to 6, pupils continue to achieve well and by the end of Year 6, their standards are above average. The school succeeds well in ensuring that achievement is consistent between pupils, subjects and years in almost all respects. However, the most able pupils achieve less well in English and science than they do in mathematics. There is often more variation in their progress when compared to that of other pupils. This is because the effective opportunities for them to show what they can really do in applying their skills imaginatively in mathematics, are not consistently matched in the other two subjects.

Leadership and management are good. Existing staff and governors have contributed well to ensuring a smooth transition as the new headteacher has taken up her post. She has quickly developed a good understanding of the school's strengths and where it needs to improve and is using this well to set direction and identify improvement priorities. The school has succeeded well in addressing the few areas identified in need of significant improvement by the last inspection. It has also maintained the existing strengths in its provision and pupils' performance. The school's track record and the clarity of view for the future show that it has a good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the achievement of more able pupils in English and science to the level attained in mathematics.
- Help pupils to improve their understanding of life and beliefs in other cultures.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. In the nursery class they quickly learn how to find things out for themselves. They are working securely in all areas of learning by the time they leave the Reception class and their social skills are above average. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6 and their standards are above average by the end of Year 6. In mathematics

pupils develop a good range of skills and use these successfully to solve problems. Pupils write well, expressing and developing their ideas in interesting ways, in a variety of styles and situations. They use this effectively to enhance the quality of their work in other subjects, including history and geography. Pupils are able to carry out their own investigations to find things out in science. The more able pupils achieve very well in mathematics, showing high standards in the range of strategies they have learned and their ability to choose the most effective one for each task. While good, their achievement is not so consistently high in English and science. Some of their writing is less imaginative than would be expected for their ability and in science they do not always record their findings with the precision and detail that would identify high quality work. Because their needs are carefully identified and efficiently provided for, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make as good progress as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Older pupils willingly look after the younger ones. Pupils say that bullying is rare. One said thoughtfully, 'We know the difference between bullying and when you sometimes fall out with each other.' Pupils say that they will always be helped if they need this. They contribute by willingly taking on peer mediator and friendship mentor roles, helping to ensure happy playtimes. Pupils are proud that, through the school council, they often come up with good ideas to make school life better for all and that these are listened to. A group explained how their ideas to have a day a week when football is banned in the playground have improved the opportunities for all to play a range of games. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are aware that they live more privileged lives than many and show their concern by choosing their own causes to support, such as a campaign to provide clean and accessible water in African villages. Pupils' progress in their key subjects prepares them well for their futures, as does their developing understanding of their rights and responsibilities. The weakest area of pupils' development is their multicultural awareness. They learn something of other cultures, but do not develop a deep understanding of how these can influence lives and attitudes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers use assessment well to ensure that lessons meet their pupils' needs. In most lessons, teachers plan interesting activities, using a good range of resources, often including computers. Where this is most effective, imaginative tasks encourage pupils to be highly involved in their learning and give them very good opportunities to use and develop a range of skills. In mathematics, teachers provide challenging tasks that let the most able pupils show what they can really do. They do not always give these pupils full opportunity to polish up their imaginative writing skills however, so that sometimes, their writing does not fully demonstrate their ability. Most teachers are skilled in expressing high expectations for effort, so that the pace of work is usually brisk. This is not fully consistent, however. In a small number of lessons, a few pupils are sometimes allowed to work at a more leisurely pace and when this happens their progress slows. Teachers and teaching assistants work together effectively to ensure that any pupils who need extra help quickly receive this. Teachers use marking well to encourage pupils and often give guidance on how to improve work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well thought out to give breadth and balance and is adapted effectively to meet the needs of all pupils. The Foundation Stage curriculum ensures that lessons there are busy occasions, with children very involved in finding things out through a wide variety of stimulating activities. The curriculum is enhanced by French in Years 3 and 4. Plans are well in hand to improve languages provision further by introducing German in Years 5 and 6. The school is currently introducing opportunities for pupils to make their learning more meaningful by using creative arts such as music and dance as a context for their learning in subjects such as English and history. This work is still at an early stage, though. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. A wide range of well attended clubs provide good opportunities for pupils to take exercise and develop creative and cultural interests. Year 6 pupils carry out a mini-enterprise project which develops their enterprise and financial skills and teamwork.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well known to staff and systems to ensure their care are effective. A teaching assistant is trained as a counsellor for pupils who need somebody to talk to. The school effectively guides pupils on being safe and healthy and encourages them to care for each other. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well planned and effective in ensuring their good progress. Most parents are very happy with the care and security of their children. However, a few have raised concerns about how the school handles the rare occasions when there are behavioural problems. The school is working with a range of specialist agencies to ensure the best possible practice. It accepts that, in this well behaved school, all staff are not equally skilled in pre-empting the few behavioural problems before they arise. Plans are well in hand for training to ensure consistency. The school provides good academic guidance and support, based upon effective use of assessment to ensure that pupils who need extra help are quickly identified and helped by a range of strategies.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school has thoughtfully and rigorously evaluated its quality and performance. In doing so it has placed high value on advice from local authority advisers and made effective use of this. This has given it a good understanding of its improvement priorities and it initiates improvement and monitors progress towards these carefully. The school has addressed well the main improvement priority from the last inspection and has maintained its strengths in provision and pupils' personal development and standards. Subject leaders are involved effectively in monitoring teaching and learning in lessons. They have been less involved in analysing the performance of their subjects. The headteacher is aware of this and is beginning to increase the sharing of responsibility and accountability among staff. Governors support the school well and challenge and question it as necessary.

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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?	2
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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

12 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of New Scotland Hill Primary School, Sandhurst, GU47 8NQ

Thank you for welcoming me to your school recently. I enjoyed meeting you and I am grateful for the help you gave by talking to me and showing me your work. I was able to see that yours is a good school.

You make good progress in all of your main subjects. By the time you are in Year 6 you are above average in English, mathematics and science. You write well and are able to use your skills to solve mathematical problems and to find things out in science. Those of you who learn quickly are very good at choosing just the right way to deal with mathematics problems. You do not always show your full ability when using your imaginations in writing though, or when writing about scientific experiments. I have asked the teachers to give you more practice at this so that you improve.

One reason that you do well in your work is that you help your teachers a lot. You come to school regularly, usually behave very well and work hard. Some of you told me that you are concerned about people in other places who are not as lucky as you. I know that you try to help them by raising money for things like making sure everybody in Africa has clean water. This shows that you are growing up as thoughtful young people. You do not learn as much as you could about how people live in other places and the things that they believe, so I have asked the staff to improve the way that they help you in this.

The adults care for you very well and some of you told me that you know this. The adults who were already in the school have helped your new headteacher to settle in. She knows how to make your school even better and all the adults are working hard together to do this. Well done to you all and very best wishes for your futures.

George Rayner

Lead inspector