



Winkfield St Mary's CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109994
Local Authority Bracknell Forest
Inspection number 288559
Inspection date 18 January 2007
Reporting inspector Mike Thompson

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Winkfield Row
School category	Voluntary controlled		Bracknell
Age range of pupils	4-11		RG42 6NH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01344 882422
Number on roll (school)	189	Fax number	01344 893641
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr B Cooley
		Headteacher	Miss G Harbut
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Winkfield St Mary's Church of England school is smaller than most primary schools. It has seven classes, one for each year group from Reception to Year 6. Most pupils are of White British heritage, and are generally from advantaged home circumstances. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well below average. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had been in post for just over a term.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Winkfield St Mary's is a good school with many outstanding features. The parents and pupils hold their school in high regard. Their positive views are fully justified. One parent summed up the views of many when writing, 'The staff provide a safe and nurturing environment which has enabled my child to grow emotionally, socially and intellectually.'

Children in the Foundation Stage are given an excellent start to their education. When pupils join the Reception class their attainment is above average. They make very rapid progress because of the high quality of teaching and the excellent curriculum. By the time they move into Year 1, their attainment is well above average. The school successfully builds on this and ensures that pupils achieve well in all year groups. This is because pupils are taught well and the excellent curriculum provides them with a wide range of interesting and exciting activities. The pupils enjoy learning and appreciate their lessons. The teachers keep a close check on how well their pupils are doing. They are good at using what they know to ensure that their pupils make good gains in their learning. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, standards are consistently high in English, mathematics and science.

A further important factor in the school's success is the excellent climate for learning evident in all classes. This stems from the outstanding personal development of the pupils. They behave well, and show a real desire to learn.

Winkfield is a school in which each child matters. All pupils are warmly welcomed and equally valued. The quality of its pastoral care is exceptionally good. As a result, pupils feel safe and happy. The school provides sound academic guidance for its pupils. There are good systems for checking on what individual pupils know and can do within each class. In order to improve further, the school has identified the need to refine these systems. Its intention is to give managers a clearer overview of each pupil's progress between Years 1 and 6 in each of the core subjects. The school has begun to set individual targets for each pupil to reach. However, the targets set are not linked closely enough to the data collated about pupils' achievements. Consequently, they sometimes lack clarity and precision.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The governing body has managed the change in headship particularly well. Within a short period, the new headteacher has developed a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school further. The school has made good progress since its last inspection, and the way it has maintained high standards is a clear indication of its good capacity for improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that systems for tracking pupils' progress are refined further to provide management with a better overview of pupils' progress between Years 1 and 6.
- Ensure that the targets set for individual pupils to achieve are clearly measurable.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are high in all classes. The school's performance in the national tests at the end of Year 6 is consistently well above the national average. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in maintaining high levels of attainment. This level of performance stems from the culture for learning and the good teaching that is a feature in all classes.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress. Those with severe learning difficulties and disabilities do best because they are given good quality help in meeting their targets. Those with less severe difficulties make satisfactory progress. This is an area for further development that has been identified by the school and resources have been diverted to help address the situation.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins all aspects of school life. Particularly noteworthy is the excellent social development of pupils. For example, the work of the school council gives pupils first-hand experiences of democracy in action. Councillors took part in the process of selecting a new headteacher by interviewing the short-listed candidates. The newly established 'house' system helps give them a greater sense of teamwork. Pupils also make excellent contributions to the wider community in a number of ways. They support a range of charities and each year their fundraising efforts produce several thousand pounds for good causes.

Attendance rates are consistently above the national average, and illustrate pupils' exceptionally positive attitudes towards their school. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. When talking about this, one pupil commented, 'It's easy to make friends here and we don't normally have any fall-outs. If there ever are problems, the teachers always sort them out.' Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next phase of their education and for a future as life-long learners. They have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles, a good awareness of how to keep safe, show good independence in organising their work, and have high levels of competence in basic skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school's view that teaching and learning are good was confirmed by the inspection. Some of the teaching observed was of high quality. Particularly noteworthy features of lessons are the attitudes towards learning and the attention shown by all pupils.

They are interested in their lessons because their teachers explain things clearly to them and most often pitch work at suitably challenging levels. This occurs because the teachers know their pupils' learning needs very well. On some occasions, all pupils are given the same work to do, regardless of their abilities, and this slows the rates of learning for the higher-attaining pupils in particular. In all classes, teachers manage their pupils well and relate well to them. Skilled classroom assistants work well in partnership with teachers and give good quality help to pupils who need more individual attention.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is very well planned to ensure a balanced coverage of subjects. An outstanding feature is the emphasis placed on promoting pupils' healthy lifestyles and social skills through sport, and the use of expert coaches in sports such as football and swimming. A number of pupils commented enthusiastically on their swimming lessons in the school's outdoor pool during the summer term. There is a wide range of out-of-class activities, such as instrumental tuition, which help enrich the curriculum. The school ensures that visits to places of interest or visitors to the school add interest and enjoyment to pupils' learning. The annual residential visit for pupils in Year 6 helps give pupils experience of a range of outdoor and adventurous pursuits, such as abseiling, and also provides good opportunities for pupils to become more independent. These activities contribute exceptionally well to pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Overall, the care guidance and support provided for pupils is good. The quality of pastoral care is excellent. The procedures to ensure their safety and well-being are rigorous. The school provides a healthy menu for pupils at lunchtime, and this is popular with pupils. There are regular opportunities for pupils to take exercise before, during, and at the end of the school day. For example, the 'kick-start' aerobic exercise session, enjoyed by staff and pupils, provides an invigorating start to the day.

The quality of academic guidance given to pupils is satisfactory. There are good systems for assessing each pupil's academic performance, and these provide a lot of information for class teachers. The school now intends to develop this system further, and use the information more effectively to give managers an overview of pupils' development in each subject. The school is moving from a system of setting targets for groups of pupils to achieve to one in which each individual has targets to meet. This is in its early stages of development, and at present some of the targets set for pupils are not precise enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The impact of leadership is seen in the good progress made by the pupils. The new headteacher already knows the school well. She and her deputy work well in partnership and make good use of information gathered from regular monitoring to guide the school's development. However, the leadership acknowledges that its tracking systems do not yet provide managers with precise enough detail about the gains made by pupils. Governance is good. Governors carefully monitor the work of the school, know it very well, and are good at holding it to account.

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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?	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	1
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	1
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	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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?	2
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?	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.

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

Thank you very much for being so helpful when I came to visit your school. I really enjoyed meeting you, talking to you and looking at some of your work.

I think that you go to a good school. There are lots of things about your school that are excellent. I can't mention everything that I liked, so here is a list of what I think are the most important things.

- You do well in your work, and when you leave school at the end of Year 6 your results are better than those of most other schools. You should be very proud of this.
- Everyone in your school is friendly and welcoming. You behave well and get on really well with each other.
- You learn a lot in lessons because the teaching is good. Some lessons are excellent.
- Your teachers plan lots of interesting things for you to do. This is excellent.
- All of the adults in your school make sure that you are really well looked after.
- All of the people who help run your school, especially the governors and your new headteacher, make sure that you get a good education.

Even in a good school like yours there is always something that could be even better. So, I think that what needs to be done next is for the school to improve the way in which it checks on your progress. This will help the teachers to see exactly how well you are getting on in each subject as you move from Year 1 to Year 6. I would also like the teachers to set you harder targets to reach. I'm sure that you are ready for this challenge!

I am sure that you will continue to have great success in the future.

Mike Thompson

(Lead inspector)