



Fair Oak Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115891
Local Authority Hampshire
Inspection number 290357
Inspection date 17 January 2007
Reporting inspector Peter Thrussell

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Botley Road
School category	Community		Fair Oak
Age range of pupils	4-7		Eastleigh SO50 7AN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02380692207
Number on roll (school)	360	Fax number	02380694749
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Michael White
		Headteacher	Ms Hazel Shaw
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2001		

Age group 4-7	Inspection date 17 January 2007	Inspection number 290357
-------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Fair Oak is a popular, large four-form entry infant school. It serves an economically advantaged area, with very few pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The majority of pupils are from White British heritage. The proportion with learning difficulties is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Fair Oak Infant School provides an outstanding quality of education for its pupils. One parent commented, 'The school provides an excellent start for young children, educationally, socially, morally and environmentally'. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. With her outstanding vision, she is always looking for ways to further improve the school both educationally and in its physical surroundings. This is shown by the many different awards it has gained. She is extremely well supported by her deputy and a very effective leadership team. An outstanding curriculum has been developed that promotes excellent personal development. Along with outstanding care, guidance and support, this ensures that pupils make good progress in their learning.

The curriculum is very well planned and meets the learning needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and those who show particular gifts and talents. Curricular enrichment is excellent. The school's work on internationalism, which helps pupils to become very aware of the world beyond their own locality, has won a national award. The active school council is very proud of its involvement in the design and setting out of the school's spectacular international garden. Throughout the school, pupils are known very well by staff and they are fully respected as individuals. The school works extremely closely and effectively with parents, other schools and agencies to promote pupils' education, well-being and safety. 'Bring a Dad to School' days and curriculum workshops have helped to develop very strong parental involvement.

Children make a very good start in the Foundation Stage as a result of the outstanding provision. Standards in the school are well above average by the end of Year 2. The school analysed rigorously the reasons for a dip in performance in writing and mathematics in 2006 and took effective action so that it is now back on track. This means that achievement is good overall but some pupils make excellent progress. This is principally because of the good teaching and the outstanding curriculum. Another key factor is the very good use of assessment data by teachers. This information is used effectively to check that all are doing as well as expected, and to identify where additional support is necessary. Assessment information is also used to set individual targets for pupils to work towards. These are shared in termly reports to parents, and pupils themselves are keen to meet them.

Teachers also use this information well to plan different lesson activities that challenge pupils in their learning. The outstanding provision in the Reception classes ensures that the gradual steps children take in the different areas of learning are carefully recorded. Very well planned opportunities are provided to ensure that subsequent steps can then be met. Very good provision for personal and social development in Reception encourages children to develop outstanding patterns of behaviour. They become confident and independent in their approach to school and learning. Throughout the school teachers within different year groups plan well together, sharing their expertise and experience to provide good lessons. A need for more opportunities for speaking and listening has been identified by the school. Teachers are beginning to provide more opportunities, for questioning and discussion. This is helping pupils,

particularly the more able, to develop their vocabulary and ideas. Consequently, their writing is improving and they are gaining a better understanding of mathematical processes. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection and this shows that there is an excellent capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the action on speaking and listening is effectively carried through.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the school with a level of skills that is usually just above average. They make very good progress in Reception. Most achieve the learning goals expected at the end of Reception and a significant number exceed them. Progress in Years 1 and 2 has been more uneven over the last three years. The overall performance by pupils is consistently well above average. However in 2006, results for writing and mathematics were only just above average due to lower proportions achieving the highest level than in previous years. The school is now providing better opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. As a result, the progress has been accelerated and is again good in all aspects of the work. This is confirmed by the school's tracking systems. Pupils produce outstanding work in art and design and are helped considerably by a visiting artist who works alongside pupils. There are many opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT) and consequently they acquire skills that are well above average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. They respond very well when asked to reflect during quiet times in assembly. The strong focus on internationalism and excellent provision for religious education result in pupils' strong awareness of different peoples and cultures. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their above average attendance. They have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles, recognised by the Enhanced Healthy Schools and Activemark awards. Many eat the healthy school meals cooked on the site; one pupil said, 'Our dinners make us big and strong'. Pupils agree that school is a very safe place; pupils know that if they have any concerns these are quickly sorted out. They are proud of their excellent behaviour. Each classroom has a 'Happy Bus' displayed with photographs of all the pupils on board. They feel quite upset when any one of them is removed for bad behaviour and made to 'wait at the bus stop'. Pupils are regularly involved in charitable fund raising and take part in local events such as the Fair Oak Carnival. Good progress in literacy, numeracy and ICT, along with the personal skills, means they are very well prepared for their later life and learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good with some excellent features. Lessons contain strong elements that help pupils of all abilities to make good progress. Outstanding relationships encourage pupils and they are eager to learn. Lessons are planned well, taking good account of pupils' previous learning. In Reception, where children are new to the school, the warm relationships ensure that children develop the confidence to choose from a wide range of very well-organised activities. Throughout the school, teachers and education support assistants (ESAs) work well as a team and with a keen sense of enthusiasm. They encourage pupils in their learning and use a range of techniques to make lessons enjoyable. For instance, interactive whiteboards are used to good effect. Teachers generally keep up a brisk pace, although very occasionally introductions could be shorter, allowing pupils to make even more of their different activities. Opportunities for speaking and listening, for example through talking partners and open questioning, are becoming more effective in developing pupils' ideas and understanding. Teachers refer to pupils' targets throughout lessons and in their marking, so that pupils themselves are aware of how well they are doing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding and contributes significantly to the pupils' good achievement and excellent personal development. It is regularly reviewed and work is very well planned for different abilities. Interesting topics enable pupils to use and develop their different subject skills in purposeful situations. Activities are planned well for those with particular gifts or talents, such as the writing workshop held between local schools and involvement in a local recycling project. Tremendous strides have been made in the use of ICT to support pupils' learning since the last inspection, recognised by the award of the ICT Mark. A wide range of visits, visitors and a good number of after-school activities, greatly enrich the curriculum. These add interest and enjoyment to pupils' learning and promote their personal and social development. Work in the Foundation Stage is extremely well planned to provide a very good balance between structured sessions and activities chosen by children. The school's comprehensive programme of personal and social development includes very useful life skills that help pupils to become healthy, safe and responsible people.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. The school has a very strong commitment to caring, which is reflected in the very good arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of pupils. This starts with the excellent arrangements for children starting school. They become acquainted with the staff and surroundings by

spending time in school and through home visits, and are therefore keen to start school and settle very quickly. Procedures for safe recruitment and for child protection are clear, well known and rigorously applied. Teachers and ESAs support pupils' personal needs very well. When it is appropriate, counselling and emotional support are provided. The support for pupils with learning difficulties is good, enabling them to achieve as well as their classmates. Pupil's progress is assessed and tracked very well and targets set for them to work towards. Pupils understand that these give them something to aim for and are designed to help them improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The school very carefully monitors and accurately evaluates its work, identifying appropriate areas for action. When slippages in performance are identified, the school reacts vigorously and resulting actions lead to improvements. Using its excellent assessment procedures, it is extremely careful to ensure all pupils achieve as well as they can. Regular classroom observations provide teachers with useful feedback and this has helped to maintain a good quality of teaching. The results of the monitoring feed into the excellent range of opportunities for further professional development. Governors are well involved in the life and work of the school and have a good understanding of its performance. Much has been done to enhance the school and its grounds. The music room and ICT suite enable good provision for these subjects; pupils greatly enjoy the stimulating outside areas, including the pond and class totem poles. The school has outstanding links with parents who are encouraged to take a full part in their children's learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

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?	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?	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	2
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	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

I am writing to let you know what I found when I visited your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection. I spoke to some of you during my visit and you were interesting to talk to, extremely polite and helpful. You spoke very enthusiastically about enjoying school and all of the things you take part in. Fair Oak Infant School is an outstanding school.

I liked these things the most:

- You do well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children get a wonderful start to school in Reception.
- You behave extremely well, work hard and enjoy your lessons and playtimes. It was good to see you 'Huffing and Puffing' and making your way along the 'Trim Trail'.
- The school is extremely caring; pupils who need extra help are well supported.
- The school provides you with very many interesting things to do. You really are an international school.
- You understand the importance of eating the right things and taking plenty of exercise.
- The school listens to you when you suggest how things could get even better. Your international garden is really impressive.
- You value being given responsibilities. Thank you to the lunchtime monitor who looked after me.
- Your parents are keen to help you and give very good support to all that the school does.
- Your head teacher does an exceptional job and is very well supported by the staff and governors.

I have asked the school to work on this now:

- Encourage you to talk about what you want to write and to explain how you work things out in mathematics, so that you all, especially those of you who find these subjects easy, do even better.

Thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Peter Thrussell

Lead Inspector