

Lorraine School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125006
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	293164
Inspection dates	5–6 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Lily Evans

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	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Charles Barbor
Headteacher	Mrs Yvonne Beddoe (interim)
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2002
School address	Highland Road Camberley GU15 4EX
Telephone number	01276 65649
Fax number	01276 65649

Age group	4-7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a much smaller than average school situated in an old established area of mainly social housing. Following a period of falling rolls in the locality the school was part of a pupils places review from September 2006 to June 2007 with a proposal for it to close and become part of a primary school. Towards the end of that period the headteacher and senior staff resigned. In June 2007, the local authority (LA) made a decision that the school would remain open with a recommendation that a federation between two local infant schools should be explored. For the current year, an interim headteacher is working closely with the LA and partner infant school to work towards the recommended federation. Having agreed to the closure of the school, some governors, when faced with the reversal of this decision, in protest at the handling of the review, resigned. An upheld formal complaint from the governors to the local authority is currently being addressed. A depleted team of supportive governors are now initiating joint working with the partner school.

There is a higher than average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award and several other awards from festivals and community projects.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all reasonable circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to teaching and learning, and pupils' achievement.

Despite its difficulties, parents are steadfast in their support for this welcoming school in the heart of their community. They regard the school as an 'extended family' and find teachers 'kind, caring and patient' with their children. However, parents' comments show they are divided in their views of their children's progress. The findings of the inspection are that three quarters of the pupils are making satisfactory or good progress, whilst a quarter are making unsatisfactory progress. Standards of pupils' reading and writing have been below nationally expected levels for several years. In mathematics they matched national expectations in 2007. Many pupils are achieving less well than they should, in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly in Year 2. This has been the case for boys especially.

Pupils enter Reception with broadly average skills for their age and make satisfactory progress. However subsequently, too many pupils make inadequate progress and this is leading to standards that are below average by the end of Year 2. Teaching and learning have not been good enough to lift their achievement and accelerate progress for all pupils.

Personal development is satisfactory overall. Pupils are very clear about school rules and enjoy gaining rewards for good work. They know right from wrong and have good awareness of healthy living. They are kind and helpful to each other because staff provide good role models. They have good opportunities to think about what they do and how their actions affect others. Through fund raising, they take action to help others. They enjoy the clubs that the school offers and widen their experiences through visits and visitors such as drama groups and theatre visits, linked to the curriculum planning.

The interim headteacher is providing decisive leadership in cooperation with her staff, the partner school and the governing body. They are working effectively with governors from the partner school to take the school forward into a proposed local federation. She recognises that improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory and has highlighted the weaknesses that have to be tackled. Drawn up by the interim headteacher and the LA, a new, well-prioritised school development plan is in place. Actions are already having an impact on several areas including improved behaviour, a complete revision of the curriculum, reading, writing and the use of assessment. Sustainable monitoring systems are developing, shared with the partner school, in order to promote continued improvement. There is much still to be done to tackle priorities and embed the changes into the daily work of the school. Despite improvements in teaching and learning this remains a priority for raising achievement. The use of assessment is not yet fully absorbed into teachers' practice. It is too soon to measure the impact of good tracking of learning on standards and achievement over time. Taking into account the rapid changes that are happening within the school, the determination of the headteacher, the joint work with the partner school and the pro-activeness of the governors, capacity to improve is satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children are happy and enjoy school because learning is fun. Parents speak warmly of their children's experiences and progress. From the start, parents feel well supported and appreciate the helpfulness of the team in Reception class. Children enter the Foundation Stage broadly at expected levels and they progress satisfactorily in all areas of learning. Their communication, language and literacy, and social skills are low initially. They make good progress in these aspects. This is because teachers provide good opportunities for learning through play as well as activities directed by adults. Children practise learning sounds and letters well, using their knowledge to spell simple words. From an early stage, children learn to make choices, to develop independence but also to develop awareness of others. Although they are assessed at regular intervals, ongoing systematic recording of progress is a developing area. Consequently, opportunities for assessing progress are missed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Enhance pupils' rate of progress, especially in Year 2, so that all pupils achieve as well as they can in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Ensure that teachers assess and record progress systematically, and that the learning objectives are in language pupils can understand so that they know what they need to do to reach next steps in their learning.
- Embed monitoring systems that measure the impact of newly introduced strategies.
- Develop effective strategies to raise levels of attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards in English and mathematics have been consistently below average, except in 2007 when standards in mathematics were average. Recent results show that standards are overall below average but well below average for boys in reading and writing. From a broadly average start on entry to Reception and Year 1 pupils' progress and achievement is unsatisfactory by the end of Year 2. This is also the case in the current Year 2. Year 1 pupils are now progressing well, but there is evidence of some underachievement from when these pupils were in the Foundation Stage. However, weaknesses in provision in the Foundation Stage have been addressed and children are making now satisfactory progress in this class.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils are happy in their work and play. They behave well and have good attitudes to work, although this is not reflected in the poor levels of attendance. They feel safe at school but they do not attend as regularly as they should. Pupils are well aware of healthy eating. They know that running, walking and skipping are healthy exercise. Pupils value their teachers who provide good role models. They say, 'Teachers are helpful and fair. They sort things out when you have a problem.' There are few instances of pupils' unkindness to others. Occasionally, a few push in front of a queue. They are very clear about the new school rules and understand that they are sensible. They respect their teachers and have a strong sense of right and wrong. They also know there are consequences for wrongdoing, which they say 'make you try not to be naughty'. Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given, including being members of school council,

helping teachers and friends, working for the headteacher and carrying the register to the office. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Pupils have good opportunities for reflection and prayer in assembly and enjoy rewards for their successes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The quality of teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. About a quarter of pupils are not achieving well enough because of weaknesses in the teaching in Key Stage 1. This is due to the lack of teachers' awareness of how pupils learn. Some resources are used badly so that pupils become muddled about what they are learning. Most teachers use resources, such as interactive white boards, effectively, but when teachers have not prepared well, lessons lack pace and pupils lose interest, which adversely affects their progress. When these resources are used well and teachers challenge pupils effectively through questioning, pupils make good progress in their learning. An example of this was the use of a forest scene from 'The Gruffalo'. The class used the picture to give them ideas for descriptive words. They then independently used those words with confidence and pride in their writing. Opportunities are used well most of the time to review learning at the end of lessons. Teachers have begun to mark work in relation to learning objectives and to adapt planning following a review of learning in lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The newly introduced curriculum, shared with the partner school, is well planned to incorporate a broad range of activities and is undergoing changes to shift to a more topic-based approach. A suitable range of visits and visitors linked to topics, such as 'The Great Fire of London', support the curriculum effectively. At the beginning of Year 1, the curriculum is adapted appropriately to ensure a smooth transition to more formal learning. Pupils particularly enjoy the small range of clubs and after-school activities offered by the school. These are well attended. Pupils have been making chocolate logs in cookery club and their drawings of pineapples from art club are of a good standard. Pupils are joining with their partner school for performances.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory overall and there are real strengths in the way the school looks after pupils. The staff and governors are well aware of health and safety issues in this caring school. There are robust procedures for child protection and for assessing and dealing with risks, which ensures that all pupils feel safe and secure. The school provides good support and has good communications with families. Parents appreciate the school's 'open approach' and say the school gives 'fantastic support'. The family liaison worker and educational welfare officer are collaborating effectively in their work to promote improved attendance.

Tracking information has this term begun to be used to monitor progress within each half term and identify pupils who may need additional support. They are not sufficiently established to ensure that all dips in performance by pupils are identified and appropriate support and challenge given. Pupils now have literacy and numeracy targets although they are not fully aware of why

they have them or what they are. At times, the targets are in language, which is too difficult for pupils to understand. The school works well with outside agencies to ensure that they have appropriate advice for supporting pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. They ensure, for example, that behaviour management plans are appropriate.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The interim headteacher is giving effective leadership and management to the school. She is determined to raise standards and achievement through improved teaching and learning, behaviour management, curriculum planning and accurate use of assessment. As the school has as a small team of teachers she is engaging all of them in sharing areas of responsibility. Since September, changes such as new school rules, improving the frequency of teaching reading and curriculum planning are already affecting daily practice. The impact of some of the changes can be measured in the close monitoring of progress which clearly identifies the achievement of individuals. The behaviour of pupils in the past contributed to differences in the achievement of boys and girls. This is no longer the case as attitudes to learning are now positive and there is no evidence of boys' progress being different from girls. There are measurable gains in the development of boys' writing skills. Raising the quality of teaching and learning has been partly successful. Planning has improved and assessment and target setting are being used to greater effect. More support is planned in Key Stage 1 to improve the pace of lessons and the use of resources to ensure all pupils make at least satisfactory gains in their learning. The systems being introduced are secure because they are shared with all staff and are also effectively preparing the school for federated status. Working together the interim headteacher and partner headteacher are sharing aspects of management, planning, staff training, preparation time and good practice.

When the school was facing closure the governors acted to retain classroom assistants following the resignation of the headteacher and senior staff. In this way they sought to provide continuity of support for pupils in class until the school's closure. The reversal of the decision to close the school and the work of the interim headteacher led to a rapid recognition that standards had not been challenged as robustly as they should have been. The governors are now challenging more effectively. The chair of governors is already promoting improvements in standards and achievement. The governors are fully supportive of the interim headteacher and are working closely with the governors in the partner school to prepare for the proposed federation.

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Annex A

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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

22 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Lorraine School, Camberley, GU15 4EX

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to visit your school. I enjoyed seeing you at work and play especially on that lovely stage you have in the playground. When I talked with some of you, I promised to write to tell you what I think about your school. I agree with you and your parents that the school is like a family. The staff are kind and caring. They look after you well and make sure you are happy in school.

It was good to hear from you about the school rules and that you think they are sensible. I was pleased to hear that you treat each other kindly and help when there is a problem. When I was in your classrooms, I saw that you work hard and behave well. Some of you showed me your writing and read to me. It is good to know that some of you are making good progress. Too many of you, however, are not doing as well as you should. I have asked the school as a matter of urgency to make sure these pupils do better too.

I have asked your teachers to make sure that all of you make good progress in your reading, writing and number work. You showed me your targets for learning and I have asked your teachers to make sure that the targets and the words they write in your books, are easy for you to read and understand. Those who help run the school also need to check that changes to the work of the school are making a difference and helping you.

There is something I would like you to do to help your teachers. I noticed that some of you do not come to school regularly enough. For example, when it is raining some of you stay away. I would like you to come to school every day unless you are sick. In that way, the teachers can help you to make good progress in your work.

With my best wishes for your future.

Lily Evans

Lead Inspector