

Folly Hill Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125048
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	293180
Inspection date	1 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Margaret Dickinson HMI

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	83
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs S Walker
Headteacher	Mrs C Green
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2002
School address	Coniston Drive Folly Hill Farnham GU9 0DB
Telephone number	01252 716121
Fax number	01252 717845

Age group	4-7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics, their personal development, how well the school keeps track of pupils' progress and sets targets for them, and the quality of the school's monitoring. Evidence was gathered from observing lessons and break times, talking to pupils, staff and governors, checking the school's tracking sheets and records of monitoring, and analysing parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Folly Hill is a small infant school. The social and economic backgrounds of pupils are generally advantaged. Attainment on entry is above average. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school has achieved Healthy School status and eco silver status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Folly Hill is a good school. It has a lively, happy atmosphere and there is a very strong sense of teamwork. Everyone connected with the school, including governors and support staff, is committed to the education of the pupils. Even the caretaker and catering supervisor run activities for all pupils, such as orienteering gardening and cooking clubs. Parents are extremely positive about the school. The large majority added written comments to the inspection questionnaires, praising the school's 'caring family feel' and commenting on how happy their children are at school. They particularly like the way the school communicates with them and actively involves them. This was evident at an early morning handwriting workshop, for parents and children in Year 1, when more than twenty parents and carers came along to support their child.

Parents are right to be so proud of the school because this is a school where pupils do well, both academically and in their personal and social development. Pupils are very well cared for and each pupil is known well as an individual. Children start school with a good range of skills but the good teaching means pupils achieve well and this leads to significantly above average standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils' high standards and enthusiasm for learning put them in a very strong position for their next phase of their education. Teaching caters well for pupils at different attainment levels. In a mathematics lesson, for instance, on doubling numbers, pupils were picking up the idea and making good progress because activities were interesting and were pitched at several different levels. The highest attaining pupils had a particularly challenging task, to work out answers and spot an emerging pattern, and this was really making them think and persevere. The school's good curriculum also supports pupils' learning well. The school takes good account of pupils' and parents' views and has developed its curriculum to make it relevant and interesting for pupils. Greater use of drama and role play had a positive impact upon standards in writing last year, particularly for boys. The school is encouraging pupils' interest in mathematics successfully, through providing number bags which they can take home. A good range of visitors come to the school to broaden pupils' learning and awareness of the wider world. There is also good provision for physical activity, which boosts pupils' fitness and enjoyment of school.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils work and play happily together and form very good relationships. They enjoy using the apparatus and games at playtimes, and explore the wildlife area, looking for small creatures and playing creatively. One striking aspect of the school is the pupils' positive attitudes to their learning. They work hard and want to get the most out of school. Around two thirds attend the school's clubs. Pupils show particular interest in the environment and nature. They grow their own vegetables and are committed to recycling, for example, and the 'assistant caretakers' help in various ways, including going out with the caretaker to pick up litter outside the school. Pupils know a lot about different food groups and refer to the colourful charts on the dining tables when talking about healthy food. Many were keen to talk about what was in their lunch boxes and which things were good for you.

The headteacher has refined and improved the way the school tracks pupils' progress. This is used effectively to keep an eye on individual pupils' progress from term to term but their longer-term progress is not monitored as well. Targets are set for each pupil at the beginning of Year 1 to predict what each should achieve by the end of Year 2, and these are monitored regularly. However, they are not adjusted if pupils make particularly good progress during Year

1. Consequently, for some above average pupils, their targets for writing and mathematics are too modest.

The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction for the school. The governors and headteacher know the school well and, based on the particular areas of focus for this inspection, their judgements about its strengths and weaknesses are accurate. The school aims to be a place where 'all children can experience the joy of learning' and this is certainly the case. There is a determined emphasis on every child being involved and included, which is reflected in practice. All children have a chance to be on the school council, for example, and all children do gardening and cooking. Governors are extremely committed to the school and many actively support the school and keep in close touch. The governing body has seen several changes in membership over the last two years and, as a result, is rightly developing its arrangements for monitoring the work of the school other than through informal visits. Coordinators are also developing their monitoring role, through observing lessons and looking at work, for example, but this is not yet sufficiently focused and evaluative to pinpoint how the provision could be even more effective.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children settle in quickly to the Reception class because of the good care and attention from staff and the good relationships they establish with the children. Many parents wrote to say how happily their children had settled in to school at the beginning of term and how pleased they were with their early progress. Children experience a well-planned range of activities, including role-play and outdoor opportunities. They make good progress and most reach the goals for children of this age although some aspects of literacy are not as high as they are in the other areas. Children's academic and social progress is monitored carefully and a careful record kept to build up a profile on each child.

What the school should do to improve further

- Track pupils' longer term progress more effectively and ensure that targets set for above average pupils in writing and mathematics are sufficiently challenging.
- Strengthen the monitoring role of leaders so that they have a greater impact on improving pupils' learning and achievement.

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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

9 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Folly Hill Infant School, Farnham, GU9 0DB

I visited your school recently to have a look at all the things that you do. I very much enjoyed my visit and was pleased that I was able to talk to quite a few of you. I thought your wildlife area was really exciting and I enjoyed exploring it!

I thought I would write and let you know that you go to a good school. Your headteacher, staff and governors work very hard to make sure that you are cared for and that your school is a happy place to be. You also work very hard and I can see that you really enjoy coming to school and want to do your best. You all take exercise and try hard to eat healthy things. You are very good at reading, writing and mathematics. You are also good at getting on with each other, being friendly and helpful, and caring for the environment. All these things are very important too. I really like the way you all take a turn as a member of the school council and an assistant caretaker.

I have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to work on two things to make the school even better. I would like the school to keep a careful check on how well you are learning as you go from Reception to Year 1 to Year 2 and to help some of you do even better in writing and mathematics. From time to time, your headteacher, teachers and governors check how well the school is doing. I would like them to look very closely - a bit like the children in the nature area who had magnifying glasses - to see if they can spot things which would make your school even better.

Thank you once again for helping me and being so welcoming when I visited.

With best wishes

Margaret Dickinson

Her Majesty's Inspector