

Furzefield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125130
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	293205
Inspection dates	15–16 November 2007
Reporting inspector	David Wynford-Jones

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	407
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr C S Grogan
Headteacher	Mr R Twells
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2002
School address	Delabole Road Merstham Redhill RH1 3PA
Telephone number	01737 642842
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than most primary schools. The percentages of pupils entitled to free school meals, or who are learning English as an additional language and those who come from minority ethnic groups are broadly similar to national averages. The proportions of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities are above the national average. A purpose-built Specialist Learning Difficulties Centre for up to eighteen pupils aged 7 - 11 opened on the school site in autumn 2004. The school has achieved Investors in People status, holds the Basic Skills mark, the Healthy School Award and has recently gained the intermediate International Award for developing internationalism.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a welcoming and inclusive school. It provides a satisfactory quality of education. Great emphasis is placed on displaying and celebrating pupils' work and in providing a stimulating learning environment. Pupils feel valued and respected by their teachers and support staff. Relationships are good. Pupils are happy, behave well and enjoy their learning. Their personal development is good.

Pupils feel safe because the pastoral care is good and all safeguarding, health and safety requirements are met. However, care, support and guidance are satisfactory because systems for monitoring pupils' progress and the standards they achieve are not fully established. Most pupils do not know their targets for improvement or receive sufficient guidance on how to improve their work. Consequently, standards by the end of Year 6 could be higher especially in mathematics and science.

Nevertheless, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The vast majority of pupils enter Year 1 with skills and knowledge similar to those expected for their age. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average, but not all pupils reach the levels they should in reading. At the end of Year 6, standards remain broadly average. In 2007, standards were similar to those nationally in English but below in science and exceptionally low in mathematics. Currently pupils are making sound progress and standards are broadly in line with expectations. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties are progressing well especially in Years 3 - 6. This is because their needs are identified clearly and they receive well-targeted support. The support offered to pupils in the Learning Centre is particularly effective, enabling them to make good progress.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Recent revisions ensure pupils are engaged in their learning. There is a focus on practical activities and the use of the electronic white boards to make the lessons more interesting. Whilst there is some, there is not enough good teaching. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers use questioning techniques effectively and are starting to use assessment information to plan their work in order to help pupils in their learning. Teaching and learning is better in English because teachers have better subject knowledge and provide pupils with more guidance to improve their work.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The senior leadership team works together as a close partnership. Their complimentary skills provide an increasingly clear direction for the development of this inclusive school. Middle managers are developing their roles satisfactorily and have a clear view of how to bring about improvements. Governors are supportive and contribute much to the development of the school. This includes contributing to the planning of a children's centre. However, leaders and managers at all levels have not analysed with sufficient rigour the information on standards pupils achieve. Nevertheless, given the recent improvements in the quality of provision, the school has sound capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The learning experiences for the youngest children in the school are good. The vast majority enter the nursery with skills and knowledge below those expected for their age especially in communication, language and literacy. They settle quickly into school, and become happy and confident learners. In the Nursery and Reception classes, the children make good progress

because the teaching and the curriculum are good. Effective use is made of the indoor and outdoor areas to ensure the children are provided with a stimulating curriculum that is well matched to their needs. Children's progress is carefully monitored and they are tactically guided through a series of activities that promotes their learning and encourages their independence. The outdoor area is used well to promote their physical well-being and knowledge about the world around them. As a result, the vast majority of the children attain the expected levels by the end of the Reception class. Their achievement is good. The Foundation Stage is well managed; planning is good; the teachers and support staff work together well. However, there are occasions when some children, particularly the higher attaining, are not challenged sufficiently.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement and raise standards in mathematics and science, by improving the quality and consistency in teaching.
- Raise expectations by making better use of assessment to plan lessons; setting clear targets and by ensuring pupils know what they have to do to improve their work.
- Ensure leaders and managers at all levels undertake a more rigorous approach to analysing the work of the school.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Overall, pupils make sound progress in Years 1 to 6. Current standards in Year 2 are broadly in line with expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2007, standards at the end of Year 2 were similar to those achieved nationally in writing and mathematics but below average in reading. In 2007, standards in Year 6 in English were in line with the national average. However, standards in science were below average and exceptionally low in mathematics. In mathematics, the standards reached by the girls were very low. Pupils with learning difficulties attained higher standards than similar groups nationally. The below average results to some extent can be attributed to the number of pupils joining the school with poor mathematical skills and a lack of scientific knowledge. Coupled with weaknesses in teaching mathematics and science this has resulted in many pupils making barely adequate progress and not attaining the expected levels. However, with the support of the local authority, improvements are being made to the curriculum and the teaching of mathematics and science. Standards in the current Year 6 are broadly in line with expectations. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are developing a good understanding of different religious festivals and cultures. In reflecting upon friendship, older pupils understand a good deal about human feelings and emotions. Pupils say about their school, 'It is like a holiday where you get to learn; some lessons can be hard but it's fun'. Pupils are keen to talk about their work. They know about being healthy, the importance of eating fruit, drinking water and being active. They feel very safe and eagerly explain the use of the 'worry box'. They make a good contribution to the school and local community. Younger pupils

are well looked after by their 'buddy' and pupils are keen to be a member of the school council. They raise funds for the Poppy Appeal, Age Concern and other charities. Attendance has improved although figures remain below average; it is satisfactory overall. The preparation for the next stage in their education is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers and teaching assistants work together well. They use resources effectively to provide practical activities to ensure pupils are involved and enjoy their learning. Good use is made of the electronic white boards to engage pupils and make lessons interesting. Teachers encourage the pupils and warmly praise their efforts. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. In the better lessons, there is a clear focus and teachers share the purpose of the lesson so that pupils know what they have to do. However, teachers do not always clearly identify what pupils are to learn or refer to success criteria. Occasionally, the work for some pupils is insufficiently challenging because teachers have not used their knowledge of the pupils' prior learning when planning the lesson. The good support for pupils with learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language helps the children in these groups to make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Careful thought has gone into curricular planning to ensure that all subjects are covered satisfactorily and that wherever possible, links are being developed between subjects. The mathematics curriculum has been reviewed and modified and now includes more practical activities. However, planning does not always take sufficient account of the needs of pupils of differing abilities and this affects their progress, particularly in mathematics and science. The curriculum in the Learning Centre caters particularly well for the pupils by giving them stimulating, manageable and useful work, which is well matched to their academic and personal needs. Other pupils who need extra help with their learning are well supported through a suitable range of learning programmes. However, a specific programme of challenging activities for pupils that are more able has yet to be established. A good range of after school clubs, visits, and visitors to the school supports the curriculum effectively. These opportunities extend pupils' knowledge and contribute well to their personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Parents are pleased with the care their children receive. One wrote, 'The level of care is consistently high'. Pupils say they feel safe and know who to turn to if they are worried. There are good links with other specialist agencies. Effective support is given to pupils with learning difficulties, and those who have emotional and behavioural needs. The school's family support worker and play therapist sensitively support vulnerable pupils and those most at risk. However, academic guidance is not as strong. There are some examples of good marking in English and pupils are given clear guidance on how to improve their work but this is not consistent in all classes and in other subjects. Systems for recording and tracking pupils' progress are only just being established. Teachers are beginning to use the information satisfactorily to identify

pupils' needs but this is inconsistent across the school. Year group age related expectations have recently been introduced but many pupils do not know their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Senior leaders work effectively with outside agencies to improve provision. They are developing a clearer and more insightful view of how the school can improve further. This is reflected in the school improvement plan, which is based on a sound evaluation of the school's performance. It focuses on raising standards but the links to the school's suitably challenging statutory targets are not evident. The plan does not contain clear criteria for measuring its success. Subject coordinators have a sound overview of the school's performance. They are beginning to focus on identifying strategies to raise standards. This is being undertaken through the introduction of sound assessment procedures and more rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning. Governors have a reasonable understanding of the school. They are supportive and working hard to promote links with the community and have contributed much to the plans to improve the building and develop a children's centre. However, they do not challenge the school sufficiently by asking searching questions relating to standards.

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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?	3
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	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

27 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Furzeffield Primary School, Redhill, RH1 3PA

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed our visit and talking to you. We thought that you were very friendly and polite. Your behaviour in class and in the playground was good. We were very pleased to hear that you like coming to school and your attendance is improving.

We were impressed with the lovely grounds and the areas for playing at break and lunch times. It was nice to see the older pupils looking after some of the younger ones. Well done. With all the space to play games it's not surprising that you are developing a good understanding of living healthily and like keeping fit. Many of you told us how much you enjoyed the after school clubs and the visits to places like the Isle of Wight.

The education you receive at Furzeffield is satisfactory. Your friends in the Nursery and Reception classes get a really good start in school. Standards in the school are rising, especially in English but we believe they can still be higher. We have asked your teachers to give you harder work and to set you challenging targets, especially in mathematics and science. To help you achieve these targets, we have suggested that when lessons are planned more thought is given to what you already know and can do, so that you do not go over things you already understand. In addition, when your work is marked, you are given clear guidance on what you have to do next to improve it. To make certain this happens we have asked that the senior leaders, subject co-ordinators and governors look carefully at the standard of your work to see if it is good enough and to make sure that you are making sufficient progress.

Once again, many thanks for making our visit so enjoyable.

Best wishes for the future

David Wynford Jones

Lead Inspector