



Witley CofE Controlled Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125159
Local Authority Surrey
Inspection number 293213
Inspection date 16 October 2006
Reporting inspector David Marshall

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Church Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Witley
Age range of pupils	4-7		Godalming GU8 5PN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01428 682420
Number on roll (school)	96	Fax number	01428 685014
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Louise Rhodes
		Headteacher	Mrs Jillian Storey
Date of previous school inspection	21 October 2002		

Age group 4-7	Inspection date 16 October 2006	Inspection number 293213
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Witley Infant School is a smaller than average village school with a mixed catchment area of private and local authority housing. It is a popular school, which has been oversubscribed for the last few years. Although pupils' attainment on entry is usually above average, there is a wide range of abilities and needs in the school. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is average. The accommodation consists of a large Victorian main building, dating from 1836 and one demountable hut. Since the last inspection, building work has provided a new Foundation Stage classroom with covered outdoor play area, a new school entrance, office and a staffroom. The school is currently facing re-organisation due to a planned reduction of admission numbers due to a locally falling birth rate.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Witley is an outstanding school. The inspection findings agree with the school's judgement that it provides a highly effective education for all the pupils. As one parent said, 'I believe the school is an incredibly friendly, positive environment in which children flourish.'

Over the last two years, the headteacher has led the staff with skill and flair through the considerable difficulties associated with the major building work. Together, they have kept the pupils' learning central to all that they do. Their clear vision, along with the stimulating learning environment, means pupils' abilities are nurtured from the outset and all achieve outstandingly well. Pupils' standards, in Year 2 this year, in English and science are well above average for their age. Standards in mathematics, whilst less high in the past, are still well above average, and the school is already implementing ways to raise them further.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is excellent, and these young children make a very good start to their education. Teaching and learning are outstanding overall. Assessments by teachers of what the pupils know and can do are thorough. The information gained is used outstandingly well to guide pupils and move them rapidly on to the next stage in their learning. Lessons are challenging and exciting, making sure that all pupils enjoy learning. Having been given many opportunities to develop their own individual skills, support staff make an outstanding contribution to the pupils' development.

The rich curriculum covers all subjects very well and is enhanced by a very good range of additional activities. The way that the wooded and outside play areas are used makes every day exciting for the pupils. Pupils are cared for exceptionally well and all of them, including the most vulnerable, feel safe and secure. Their personal development is outstanding. Behaviour is exemplary. By the time they leave the school, pupils develop into well-rounded individuals because of their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents, who enjoy a close relationship with the school, are very pleased about this. As one wrote, 'I have watched my son develop socially, creatively and academically in the past year. He positively runs up the hill to school!'

Leadership and management are outstanding. The head teacher provides first-rate leadership. She is very ably supported by all staff and developments are driven forward at a very good pace. Teamwork is excellent. Strengths and weaknesses are speedily identified because the school has excellent systems for monitoring its work. This is especially important as the school faces the challenge of moving down in numbers from four classes to three in the near future. The staff's determination not to rest on their laurels is evident and the school has an excellent capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

The school has no major issues for improvement. However, staff and governors agree with the inspection findings that they should -

- Raise the good standards in mathematics to match those achieved in English and science.
- Ensure that current successes are maintained during the period of re-organisation.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Most pupils enter the school with above average attainment, although the number needing additional help for learning difficulties is around average for the size of the school. Standards are consistently well above those expected for the pupils' ages by the time they leave and their achievement is outstanding. In the 2006 national assessments, pupils reached standards that were well above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. Their targets are challenging and in these national assessments were exceeded with a high proportion of pupils achieving the higher level. The school is especially good at assessing how well its pupils are doing so that gaps and weaknesses are identified straight away and tackled speedily. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well across the whole curriculum and pupils are achieving well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils speak warmly about their school, immensely enjoying both work and play. They are polite, respectful of each other, well-mannered and confident. Lunch times and playtimes are sociable occasions when pupils chat and play together amicably through the use of the 'Rainbow Board' system. Attendance is average and pupils feel safe at school and show great confidence in asking any adult for help if they need it. Pupils are developing a very good understanding of how to stay healthy, by eating sensibly and enjoying physical activities in the spacious school grounds and using the good play equipment.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils relate exceptionally well to each other and adults. They are keen to take responsibility both for classroom tasks and by taking on school roles. Through a wide range of activities they understand about the beliefs and lives of people from different cultures. Pupils' contribution to the community is outstanding. In addition to helping different charities, the school council has been instrumental in putting forward ideas that are making a real difference to the quality of their own school. Pupils are learning the necessary skills that will enable them to settle into their future schools well, and become good citizens in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. They are never less than good and often excellent. Teachers' planning is exceptionally good and, in all subjects, firmly based on the use of careful, but simple, assessments. This ensures that tasks are pitched at the right level for all pupils. Learning is fun. Lessons move forward at a very good pace and pupils' attention is held throughout. The use of resources, such as the interactive whiteboards and the school grounds, inspires pupils to try their hardest. High expectations of pupils' behaviour are evident in all classrooms and are consistently met. A feature of the successful teaching is the way that staff question pupils, get them thinking and expect well-reasoned responses. These techniques work especially well for support staff working alongside those with learning difficulties.

Marking, with the pupils, is used very well to give very clear and immediate pointers about what they need to do reach even higher standards. Targets are used very well and all pupils know what they have to do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school's curriculum is excellent. Learners enjoy and benefit from a wide range of activities inside and outside the classroom. Approaches to learning match the needs of all pupils including those who have learning difficulties, or have gifts and talents. There is a good range of high quality additional activities that enrich the curriculum and promote pupils' development and enjoyment. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health development are excellent and the school uses an exceptional range of community and other links to enhance learning. By the end of Year 2, pupils are well prepared for junior education and the transfer between schools is managed very well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides a very high level of care, support and guidance for its pupils, and related procedures, including child protection, are very good. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are firmly in place and carried out thoroughly and regularly. Pupils' safety and well being are paramount at all times, ensuring that the school is a very safe and supportive place to be. Children settle into the Foundation Stage particularly well because of the excellent relationship with the local playgroups, and the outstanding care taken over the induction process. From this early start, staff members know all pupils really well and treat them with respect and fairness at all times. The partnership with parents is excellent. The Friends of Witley School provides unstinting support and is a real asset to the school.

Linked to the exceptional practice in pastoral care, there is the robust assessment of academic progress. Comprehensive assessment information is regularly updated and pupils' strengths and weaknesses are accurately identified and appropriate support or extra challenges are provided at all times.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Teamwork is of the highest quality and everyone plays a valuable part in moving the school forward. The headteacher's leadership is outstanding. One parent paid her a tribute by saying, 'The head has settled in extremely well and grows in strength and stature. She is incredibly level-headed and has a fabulous team of staff working with her.' Everyone involved in the school shows an unremitting drive to achieve their best.

There is a clear understanding of strengths of the school and areas that need more development. The school's self evaluation is extremely effective. The school development plan provides very clear guidance on relevant issues for raising standards and takes into consideration the need for future re-organisation and its possible impact. The outstanding governing body is fully involved in this process and they bring a wide range of skills to bear as they act as critical friends, challenging decisions and requesting explanations where this is necessary.

The school has outstanding links with other schools through the 'Seven Saints' group to give teachers every possible opportunity to develop their own knowledge and understanding. Management at all levels is very good with excellent systems in place to monitor pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning through carefully addressing any issues that might arise. Within the school, there is a high commitment to include pupils in all activities and the care and concern for all pupils is a high priority. Parents value this and see it as an important feature of the school. The school is very well placed to continue its successes and has an excellent capacity to improve.

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

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	3
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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	1
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	1
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 so much for welcoming me into your school. I enjoyed my time with you and would now like to tell you what I found out about your school. I agree with what one or two of you told me - Witley is an excellent school.

I think you all do very well and really try hard. You are all making excellent progress and I was very impressed that you knew what to do to make your work even better. I saw that you know you are especially lucky to have so many different activities both during and after school. I also saw how keen you are to take part and how well you behave. Many of you told me how much you enjoy being at school, and how proud you are of what you can do. I am sure that you will continue to try hard so your school can be the fun place that you like and where you can all learn. Over the next two years, there may be some changes in how many classes and teachers there are in the school. I have asked the staff to make sure they keep the school as good as it is now. You can help by making sure you always listen carefully to whichever teacher is taking your class. Your teachers are also working hard to make sure that you do as well in maths as you do in English and science.

Finally, I would like to thank you once again for all your help. I wish you well in the future.

With kind regards

David Marshall (Lead inspector)