



Waverley Abbey Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125232
Local Authority Surrey
Inspection number 293232
Inspection date 27 February 2007
Reporting inspector Christopher Gray

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	The Street
School category	Voluntary aided		Tilford
Age range of pupils	7-11		Farnham GU10 2AE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01252 782321
Number on roll (school)	476	Fax number	01252 783767
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Dennis Marshall
		Headteacher	Mr David Jeffs
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is much larger than most junior schools. Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. The school is oversubscribed and pupils come from a wide rural area. Their attainment on entry to Year 3 is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with outstanding features. Pupils enjoy their learning enormously because they are given an outstanding curriculum. 'My son really does skip to school', wrote one parent. 'At Waverley Abbey', reported another, 'learning and fun go hand in hand'. Pupils agree and really appreciate opportunities such as the drama and music lessons, extra-curricular activities and the frequent trips out of school. The school makes excellent use of a wide range of outside bodies to facilitate this provision.

Pupils' personal development and well being are outstanding. Their behaviour is excellent and they take their responsibilities seriously, such as being peer mediators. When asked if the scheme worked, one pupil gave an example: 'I saw two children looking very annoyed with each other but they came out holding hands'.

Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by the end of Year 6. This represents good achievement, the result of good teaching. In English, standards are high and pupils make outstanding progress in this subject. Their progress in mathematics is good but is not as strong as in English. This is because teachers do not always match pupils' work closely enough to the levels pupils have reached previously.

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are outstanding. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and that bullying is not a worry for them. 'There is some minor bullying - like name calling', said one child, but all those spoken to said that it is always dealt with well. Parents agree. The school has recently developed an excellent system of tracking pupils' progress, which is being used well by all teachers to direct extra support where it is needed.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher sets an excellent example of hard work and care for all pupils. Many parents wrote to say how much they appreciate his work and that of all staff. One summed it up in the following words, 'The staff are totally committed to the school and welfare of the children'. Planning for school development is thorough, but its effectiveness is sometimes slowed down simply because staff try to do too much at once.

What the school should do to improve further

- Enable pupils to make faster progress in mathematics by matching the work they are given more closely to what they have already learnt.
- Focus on a smaller number of key priorities for school development in order to hasten the progress made.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well throughout the school. They begin in Year 3 with standards in English, mathematics and science that are above average and reach high standards in

English by the end of Year 6. Standards in mathematics and science are well above average. In mathematics, the school recognises that pupils in the middle sets do not progress as well as those in the most and least able sets. Throughout the school, boys' achievement is as good as that of girls and pupils with learning difficulties achieve very well. The school successfully meets its challenging targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their enjoyment of school is clear in all classes and activities, and a large number of parents wrote to confirm this. One observed, 'I wish I was a pupil there'. Pupils know how to stay safe and healthy and say that they have had a big effect on the content of their diet, both at school and at home. Pupils in Year 5 noticed that behaviour at playtimes seemed to be calmer when pupils had a fruit break. Pupils' attendance is above average.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. One boy observed that religious belief is important to many by saying, 'I really want to know the answers to all sorts of questions and religion can answer them'. 'But', said another, 'there's no right or wrong answer - it's what you believe'. This shows that pupils are used to discussing important issues in class. The school council is an important forum for bringing pupils' views together. Members cite many examples of where they have made a difference and non-members agree that their voice is heard. Even when the adults do not agree, as in the request that girls might wear trousers, pupils understand and accept the reasons. These skills, coupled with good standards in literacy and numeracy, are giving pupils an excellent grounding for their future life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. When pupils were asked what they would remember as special about their school, one pupil said, 'Teachers make lessons fun, not boring'. Teachers use interactive whiteboards well to enhance the interest in lessons. In a Year 4 art lesson, pupils were learning about the customs of the Maasai tribe and saw pictures of their jewellery to help them make attractive necklaces.

Marking of pupils' work is thorough and involves pupils in evaluating their own learning, by means of a 'traffic light' system. This works very well. If a pupil reacts with a red or amber light, the teacher responds quickly. A very good example was seen in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, where the teaching assistant reinforced learning for a small group while the teacher took the rest of the class further. However, teachers do not always make such effective use of matching the work they give pupils in mathematics to their prior learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding curriculum. As one parent wrote, there is 'the right balance of educational achievement and interest in out-of-school activities and sport to match'. Subjects are linked together well, as observed in Year 3, where pupils are studying the Romans. One class used computers well to explore a virtual Roman city while another group made 'Spiced Roman Cakes' in a technology lesson.

Drama is used frequently in many lessons. During the inspection, a theatre group was working with Year 4, to their obvious delight. There are many opportunities for pupils to learn musical instruments or sing in choirs. French is taught regularly and some pupils said they would like to learn another language as well. All of these activities enhance pupils' personal development enormously.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support offered to pupils are outstanding. This is corroborated by one parent who wrote, 'I could not have expected a better environment for my children to be in'. 'Happy children = good education' noted another. Procedures for child protection are thorough, so that pupils and their parents are confident in their security and welfare.

Pupils receive very good guidance on the levels they have reached in their work and older ones know what they must do to reach the next level. Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is closely monitored every term. The school has evolved its own, computer-based system which it has trained all staff to use regularly. This enables teachers to be accountable for the progress of their own class, and they use this system well to direct extra help.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher gives an excellent lead and this is recognised by very many parents. One remarked, 'The headteacher is a constant presence and appears to know every one of his pupils'. Governors are very well involved in running the school and planning for its development. Senior and middle managers work hard to develop their areas of responsibility. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and reflects the good capacity to make further improvements. A new initiative is to spread the responsibility for management across all staff, through focus groups. These are working parties, led by a coordinator or senior manager and joined by a teacher from each year group. This is a good idea, but there are too many groups running at once, because the development plan contains too many priorities. The result of this is that the progress on some fronts is not as fast as it could be.

Almost all parents responded to the questionnaire, with a great show of support for the school's work. A few parents think their views are not taken sufficiently into account, but a large majority disagree. One wrote, 'I feel my views are welcomed and the school takes parents' comments seriously'. A small number have some reservations about homework, but there is no consensus on how it might be improved. Pupils seem resigned to it. One said, 'It helps but sometimes it can be a lot'.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
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	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?	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?	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 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	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

I really enjoyed my visit to your school recently and thank you for being so friendly and well-mannered. Many of you greeted me by name and this made me feel very welcome. I was able to get a good impression of your opinions about school from the two groups of children I met and from the individuals I spoke to as I visited all the classes. Your behaviour and attitudes to school are outstanding (another word for excellent).

You told me how much you enjoy your school and very many of your parents wrote to me to tell me the same. You appreciate all the extras the school offers you, such as drama, music and sport, and you are right to do so because you are very lucky to have so many. You understand the importance of staying safe and healthy, but you also told me that the occasional biscuit is not bad for you. I learnt about the many systems that encourage you to learn well, such as 'Hero of the Week' in Year 6.

You go to a good school. The teaching is good and all the adults give you excellent care and help. The buildings are lovely and you do your bit by looking very smart. There are a couple of things that I have asked the school to do, to make it even better. The first is about mathematics, where you are sometimes given work that you can already do and is too easy. I have asked the school to find ways of making sure that you start off from where you had reached in previous lessons. The other thing I have asked concerns simplifying the school's plan for improvement.

I am sure that you will continue to enjoy your time at Waverley Abbey. I know that many of you will be sorry to leave.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Gray
Inspector