

Park Mead Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125293
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	293256
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Peter Thrusell

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	477
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Janet Walden
Headteacher	Mr Andy Clark
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2001
School address	Park Drive Park Mead Estate Cranleigh GU6 7HB
Telephone number	01483 274315
Fax number	01483 274907

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Park Mead is a very large two-form entry primary school, which becomes a three-form entry at Key Stage 2. The infant and junior schools amalgamated four years ago. There is little deprivation, with a very small proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils have White British heritage. A smaller than average proportion have learning difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Park Mead is a satisfactory school with some good features. Children get a very good start to school in Reception and parents recognise and value this. One commented, 'My child's first year at school has been a very positive and enjoyable experience'. A wide range of well-planned experiences ensures that children make good progress in all the areas of learning. By the end of Reception, a significant majority have fully achieved the learning goals expected. Children develop good personal and social skills. In Years 1 and 2, a very well-planned, topic based curriculum provides pupils with enjoyable and relevant learning experiences. Consistently good teaching in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 ensures that all pupils are challenged to do their very best. As a result, by the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are exceptionally high.

In Years 3 to 6, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and weaker monitoring of achievement and standards hinder pupils' progress. By Year 6, given their starting points in Year 3, standards are above average and achievement is satisfactory. The school now tracks the progress of pupils in Years 3 to 6. It has identified where pupils are not making the expected progress, particularly in writing and mathematics. Some action has been taken to remedy this, but the school has not fully analysed its latest assessments to show clearly whether this has yet had any impact. Teachers do not always make enough use of assessment information to plan what pupils need to learn next. This means that pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and supported in their learning, so that progress is slowed.

Pupils make good progress in their personal development throughout the school. They are supported in this through the school's good links with parents and other agencies, which help to ensure their well-being. Pupils behave well and enjoy their education. They particularly enjoy the wide range of clubs offered within the school's good curriculum. This includes many popular sporting opportunities, which encourage pupils to be physically fit. These, along with encouragement to eat the right things, have earned the school the Healthy Schools Award. Music is a strength of the school. Performances, both in and out of school, add to the good contribution pupils make to the community. These personal qualities encourage positive attitudes to learning.

Good leadership and management in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 is the key to the good progress made here and the standards achieved. However, in Years 3 to 6, leadership and management, including that of the headteacher, are satisfactory. The monitoring of teaching and learning especially, has not been rigorous enough to raise their quality and consistency, so as to ensure that all pupils make the best progress possible. This shows that the school's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement rigorous monitoring procedures in Years 3 to 6 in order to raise the quality and consistency of teaching and learning.
- Ensure that the actions taken by the school are fully evaluated for their effectiveness.
- Make full use of assessment information throughout Years 3 to 6 to plan what pupils need to learn next, so that all make the best progress possible.

A small proportion of the 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

Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average and achievement is satisfactory. Children make good progress in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. In recent years, standards reached by the end of Year 2 have been consistently and exceptionally high. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress throughout Years 3 to 6. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning, and weaker monitoring of progress, means that progress here is variable. In Year 6, teachers are particularly aware of the targets pupils are expected to reach by the end of the year. A more careful check on their progress helps pupils to make up lost ground in their learning. Action has been taken to address weaknesses in writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 6. More work is now done on punctuation and sentence construction; greater attention is given to assessing writing and showing pupils how this could be further improved. Better planning has been introduced for mathematics, with attention to problem solving and progression in written calculation. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties make similar progress to their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is above average. A parent commented that 'school is a happy place with happy children'. However, in some lessons, pupils' enjoyment is reduced where they have to sit and listen to teachers for too long, and they are not fully engaged in their learning. Pupils feel safe in school. They say that bullying is rare and any incidents are quickly dealt with by staff. Pupils know that they can talk to adults if they have any personal concerns. Behaviour is generally good, although the behaviour of a few at break times requires closer supervision. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Music, art and literature from other cultures and celebration of different festivals enrich pupils' cultural development. Their contribution to the school community is good. The school council takes its responsibility seriously, and older pupils are eager to be buddies for younger ones. Collecting funds for charities makes pupils well aware of the wider world and its concerns. These personal skills, along with their skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), prepare pupils well for their future life and learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. In Reception, Years 1 and Year 2, they are good. Lessons here are well paced and engage pupils well. In Reception, a good balance of teacher led and children's independently chosen activities provide valuable opportunities to develop independent learning skills. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use assessment very well to ensure work is matched to pupils' needs. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together as a team. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is inconsistent. Lessons are well prepared and

managed, but planning does not always take enough account of previous learning, to ensure that pupils are sufficiently challenged or supported in their learning. Classrooms have interactive white boards, but these are not used well enough to enhance pupils' learning. In some lessons, teaching assistants could take a more active role throughout in supporting pupils. Marking is not always rigorous enough. It does not provide enough comments that relate to pupils' targets and show them how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is good. In Reception, planning effectively links the different areas of learning within a topic. Practical and hands on experiences make the curriculum exciting and enjoyable for children. In Years 1 and 2, subjects have been carefully integrated into a topic based approach. A similar approach is envisaged for Years 3 to 6, although there are already some opportunities for pupils to use and develop their literacy and ICT skills in other subjects. Good opportunities are provided for gifted and talented pupils, for example through science challenges and encouragement to develop talents in sport and music. The school's comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education includes very useful skills that help pupils to become healthy, safe and responsible people. A wide range of visitors and visits brings the curriculum to life. Special events, such as Caribbean and Victorian days, make the curriculum more exciting and stimulating. A large number of after school clubs further enriches the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pastoral care is good, reflected in the caring ethos within the school in which all learners are valued and listened to. Good induction procedures ensure that children quickly settle into Reception. Procedures to ensure pupils' safety and welfare are appropriately followed. Risk assessments are in place, including a recent site security assessment. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported well through a range of focused programmes. There are good links with external agencies to safeguard the interests of the most vulnerable children and support those with learning difficulties. Pupils' progress is tracked throughout the school, but the use of this in Years 3 to 6, to clearly identify how well pupils are doing and where additional support may be required, is not fully developed. Targets are set for pupils to aim for, but these are not yet sufficiently linked to individual needs, nor fully understood by pupils as a tool to guide them in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and senior staff have a good focus on promoting the personal development and well being of pupils. The school's self evaluation shows a satisfactory understanding of where it needs to improve its practice. The school improvement plan is detailed, but is not clear enough about how its actions are to be evaluated, particularly in relation to standards and progress throughout the school. Monitoring and evaluation are not yet rigorous enough to bring about sustained improvement, nor sufficiently focused on the areas identified for action. There has been a planned movement of staff both within and between key stages, particularly to take a lead in years 3 to 6. This has

yet to show an impact on the overall quality of teaching and the progress pupils make. Governors are supportive of the school. They have good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are searching in their questioning of the school's performance. Their monitoring procedures have become more tightly focused. Parents are supportive of the work of the school. A small minority of parents feel that the school does not take account of their concerns. However, the school, through regular workshops and questionnaires, ensures that all views are considered. Good links with local schools help with the school's curriculum provision and development.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	3

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 behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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	2

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?	2
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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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	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

18 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Park Mead Primary School, Cranleigh, GU6 7HB

I am writing to let you know what we found when we visited your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection. We spoke with many of you during our visit and you were always interesting to talk to, polite and helpful. You spoke enthusiastically about enjoying school and all of the things you take part in. Park Mead is a satisfactory school and has some good features.

We liked these things the most:

- children in Reception get a good start to their time in school
- pupils in Years 1 and 2 work particularly hard
- the school makes sure that you are safe and well looked after
- you enjoy school and are all keen to keep fit and eat the right things
- there are many extra things that the school provides for your interest and enjoyment; I did like listening to the drumming.

We have asked the school to work on the following things now. It must check that all of the teaching in Years 3 to 6 is as good as possible, so that you can all do your very best. One of the things that would help is for teachers to make sure that your work in lessons is just right for each one of you. You all need to be challenged to think carefully and work hard. The school has planned improvements, including the opportunities you have to learn in different subjects, and should look carefully to see how well these are carried out.

We did enjoy visiting your school and watching you learn.

Yours sincerely

Peter Thrussell

Lead Inspector