



Whyteleafe Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125297
Local Authority Surrey
Inspection number 293257
Inspection date 17 January 2007
Reporting inspector Michael Pye

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Whyteleafe Hill
School category	Foundation		Whyteleafe
Age range of pupils	4-11		CR3 0AA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0208 660 2062
Number on roll (school)	441	Fax number	0208 763 2618
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Jackie Baker
		Headteacher	Mrs Jenny Jeffcoat
Date of previous school inspection	9 July 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This larger than average primary school takes pupils from a range of backgrounds and the school is oversubscribed. Very few pupils are entitled to free school meals. Pupils are predominantly of White British origin, and the percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average, as is the number of pupils whose home language is not English. Similarly, there are relatively few pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, or statements of special educational need. There has been some long-term staff illness and a recently appointed headteacher. It has a number of national awards such as the Silver Artsmark and Eco-school awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Parents are correct in seeing this school as providing a good standard of education for its pupils. It has maintained consistently good achievement and above average academic standards across recent years, whilst also ensuring that pupils' personal development and well-being are good, and that care for pupils is of a high quality.

Children enter Reception with skills and knowledge expected of their age. Good management and teaching contributes to these children making good progress, and most achieve their expected learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Pupils continue to progress well across the school and, by Year 6, they achieve standards that are above average. The progress pupils make in reading is particularly strong, partly because of the consistently good teaching, but also because the school targets the reading levels of pupils accurately. Teaching and learning are good, with detailed planning and effective use being made of specialist teachers in areas such as music and art. Many pupils praised the work they do in these areas, 'It's fun because you work hard'. Targets for improvement are set, although not all staff consistently refer to them when marking, or during lessons. Consequently not all pupils know their targets or how to use them to further improve their work.

Another reason why pupils learn so well is that the majority show an outstanding enjoyment of school. They feel stimulated and motivated by the wide range of activities provided through the good curriculum. Pupils' adopt healthy life styles because these and the related ecological messages are very well reinforced across all subjects. Also, as one parent wrote, 'There is a good range of high quality extra-curricular clubs and activities, both competitive and non-competitive.' Pupils behave well and are polite. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education because of the good standard of basic skills they have. This includes information and communication technology, which has benefited from improved provision since the last inspection. The care of pupils is very good, with one pupil saying that when she enters the playground 'It is like coming home, with friends and things to do, and adults to look after you'.

The recently appointed headteacher and her staff monitor and review the school's performance well, and have identified relevant development plans. The school has also developed good links with a range of external partners that help support pupils' learning. The governors are very effective in developing and maintaining links with the school. They visit regularly and, through the newly established annual conference, have direct contact with school staff.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all pupils know their targets and how to use them to improve their work through a more consistent reinforcement of them within lessons and in marking.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and pupils achieve well. Children enter Reception with skills and understanding which are broadly as expected for their age, but with strengths in knowledge and understanding of the world, and personal development, and a comparative weakness in numbers and writing. They get a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage and upon leaving most have achieved the learning goals expected.

Consistently good teaching results in pupils achieving well, and standards at the end of Year 2 are average in writing and above average in mathematics. Assessments show standards to be significantly above average in reading, reflecting very good progress for many pupils. The school has identified that some boys' writing is not progressing as well as it might. Actions taken are already having an impact. Boys are being motivated by strategies such as writing about their trip to HMS Belfast and through completing journals. Pupils' positive attitudes to work help ensure that pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 to 6. As one pupil said, 'Lessons are good because we are learning'. National testing at the end of Year 6 shows standards in mathematics, science and English to be above average.

Pupils from ethnic minority groups achieve well. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) make good progress towards their personal targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, with some outstanding elements. This results in large part from the school's commitment to developing learners' independence, and providing them with a wide range of experiences. Pupils talk readily about their contributions to the 'eco-school', recycling mobile phones, and helping to develop the pond area. They have an excellent understanding of healthy life choices, enjoy school and are active during breaks and in physical education and regular swimming lessons in the school pool. Pupils know how to stay safe because the messages are well reinforced in subjects. For example, in English pupils showed a good understanding when they discussed the wisdom of Red Riding Hood going away with a stranger. Behaviour and attitudes are good. Pupils feel their views are respected; the school council have made decisions about lunchtime arrangements and playground equipment. Pupils make a good contribution to the community, particularly through the choir and orchestra. They are well prepared for later life because they leave with good basic skills and have had experiences of involvement in the community, such as campaigning for a road crossing. Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils generally show respect and sensitivity to others, and tell of the good opportunities in 'circle time' to reflect and discuss matters of concern. Attendance is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, and often better. Senior managers monitor teaching carefully and give good feedback to staff. Pupils' good achievement levels reflect the secure nature of teachers' subject knowledge, with good use made of specialist knowledge in subjects such as art and music. Teachers liaise well with assistants and consequently pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress. Particular strengths are in detailed lesson planning which contributes to a good range of activities, including practical experiences, for pupils. These address the different learning styles of pupils and boost their motivation.

Pupils willingly give their views because they feel safe and respected; relationships are very positive. From the Reception classes onwards the pupils are encouraged to make choices and are given good opportunities to become independent learners. However, there are inconsistencies in the extent to which pupils are encouraged to raise questions and comment on each other's answers.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, with some very strong features, and it meets the needs of all pupils. Those pupils who learn best through practical work are well motivated by the theme days and weeks on topics such as multi-cultural art. Planning helps deliver opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes. More able mathematicians are given the chance to solve problems, often in a practical way such as calculating the scoring rate in a rugby test match. However, the links between subjects to make learning even more relevant for pupils are in the process of being developed. A start has been made in history in developing links between subjects so as to make learning even more relevant for pupils. The school recognises that this requires further development.

Boys' reading and writing is being improved through books that appeal to them, and through activities they enjoy, such as writing a biography about Queen Victoria. Interwoven through the curriculum are messages about healthy living and keeping safe; the police, dentists and nurses visit and internet safety courses have been conducted. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils including sports and the 'Bird Watch' programme. Pupils' emotional education is being well developed through the introduction of a new course as part of the personal, social and health education programme. Pupils' social skills are greatly enhanced through the residential trips in Years 5 and 6.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Overall, the care, guidance and support given to pupils are satisfactory. The very good quality of care is a particular strength and contributes well to the pupils' personal and academic development. Parents spoke of their children feeling safe and secure in school. Pupils trust the adults and know who to approach if they need help. The school has positive relationships with a very wide range of outside agencies that support vulnerable pupils and families. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities progress well, partly because of the good work of teaching assistants, but also because of the wide range of support programmes, managed effectively by the special needs co-ordinator. Very good transition arrangements which include home visits help Reception children settle quickly. Whilst pupils have literacy and numeracy targets, they are inconsistently reinforced in lessons and in teachers' marking. Consequently some pupils are unsure of their targets and how to use them to improve their work.

Health and safety arrangements and child protection procedures are secure. Rigorous checks ensure that all adults are cleared to work with children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The experienced headteacher has sought successfully to provide more staff with opportunities to monitor and manage their areas of responsibility. This is already having a positive effect with some managers, but not all, now observing lessons. The English and mathematics co-ordinators, for example, use effective systems to track pupils' progress and oversee their progress towards set targets. However, some other co-ordinators lack a secure overview of the attainment in their subjects, although they are all involved in training, work scrutiny and the development of action plans. The school makes very effective use of its resources, and has done much to cope with the recent long-term absence of some teaching staff, so that standards have been maintained. It has been particularly successful in extending the outdoor facilities in Reception.

A minority of parents expressed concerns regarding communication, but this was not supported by the majority. One parent wrote, 'As parents, we feel informed and supported'.

Monitoring and evaluation systems are very well established, and any proposed changes are carefully trialled prior to introduction. Less able pupils in mathematics have benefited from a support programme trialled in Year 3, which has now been extended throughout the school. The school self-evaluation is accurate and identifies relevant areas for improvement. The governors make an exceptional contribution to school monitoring and development planning. They visit regularly and recently participated in a new annual conference with a wide range of staff. This high level of teamwork, where experience and good practice are shared, reflects a strong capacity to further improve the school.

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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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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?	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?	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.

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	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

You might remember my visit to your school. I really enjoyed talking and listening to your views, and I was very happy to learn how much you enjoyed being at your school. Thank you. I agree with you that your school is good.

There are some things that your school does very well:

- You receive good teaching and make better progress than many pupils in other schools.
- Most of you are better at English, mathematics, and science than many other pupils.
- You told me that the adults know you, respect you and care for you very well. You behave well and are aware of the needs of others.
- You told me that you feel safe in school and you have a very good understanding about how to stay healthy. You are working really hard to improve the school environment - the wood carvings are great. To those members of the eco-club who are improving the pond area - well done!
- Children settle well in Reception because the school ensures that they know you and your families well. You get a good start to your schooling.
- You told me that the school gives you many different opportunities to learn, such as the theme days and weeks. Your multi-cultural artwork is really good!
- The headteacher and her staff, including the hard-working governors manage the school very well and know what to do to improve things even more.

I have asked your school to ensure that you are reminded more about how well you are making progress towards your targets.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Michael PyeLead Inspector