

Cookham Rise Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109856
Local Authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	298540
Inspection dates	3–4 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Barry 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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Gaynor Sprules
Headteacher	Mrs Christina Lewis
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2006
School address	High Road Cookham Rise Maidenhead SL6 9JF
Telephone number	01628 520961
Fax number	01628 532536

Age group	5–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves an area that is more advantaged than most. Most pupils are White British. Until this year, there were several years in which there was high staff turnover. The current headteacher took up post in July 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with Section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. It has made good progress since the previous inspection and is satisfactory with good features. The main reason is that leadership and management are now good, having been inadequate a year ago. The new headteacher has revitalised the staff and radically improved the ethos of the school in a remarkably short time. She is ably supported by her new leadership team and together they have spearheaded improvements in the quality of teaching, management systems, pupils' behaviour and communications with parents. Most parents are appreciative of the turn round in the school's fortunes. One parent wrote, 'I feel that the difference since the last inspection is amazing. The school now has an enthusiastic and positively buzzing atmosphere.' The quality of care, guidance and support is good and underpins pupils' good personal development and well-being. Pupils greatly enjoy school and their positive attitudes are shown by their above average attendance. They say that their pride in school has been restored.

Children enter the Reception class with skills that are a little above average. They make good progress until the end of Key Stage 1 as a result of the consistently good teaching. The impact of the turbulence and high staff turnover has been most marked in Key Stage 2. Over a three-year period standards declined, particularly for the results obtained by the more able pupils. In the 2006 national tests for Year 6, the results were below average and the achievement of pupils had been unsatisfactory. The school's analysis showed that other year groups in Key Stage 2 were also underperforming in English, mathematics and science. The school has taken very robust action and has reversed the decline such that pupils' rate of progress has accelerated significantly. The school has rightly attached a high priority to raising the quality of teaching. It has done so successfully through a combination of monitoring, training, improved use of data and also some good appointments and promotions in the last year. Teaching is now good and most pupils have made good progress in the last year, albeit from a low base in some cases. More work needs to be done, however, as pupils still have gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding due to previous weaknesses in teaching and leadership. Consequently, the standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are still only average and achievement overall is therefore satisfactory.

Academic guidance has improved since the previous inspection. The new system for tracking pupils' progress has enabled the school to identify underachievement by individual pupils. This information is used well to provide additional support which helps pupils to improve. The school only uses measures of attainment from a year ago as their baseline and has not yet extended its analyses to cover the whole time spent by pupils in the school. Nor does the school analyse its own data to check whether all the previously underachieving groups have improved their performance sufficiently.

Leadership and management are good but there has been insufficient time for the school to achieve all its aspirations. The school has had to prioritise its actions. In the first year following the previous inspection it has concentrated sensibly on improving standards in English, mathematics and science. Many subject leaders are new to their roles, have started well but have not yet had significant impact on raising standards. Most initiatives have been led by senior managers. However, the subject leaders are enthusiastic and have good potential. Plans are already well advanced to improve the curriculum, for instance. Consequently, the school is well placed to improve further if the present rapid rate of improvement continues.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science.
- Ensure that middle managers carry out their roles effectively in order to raise achievement.
- Extend the use of assessment data to track the progress of different groups of pupils.

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

In most years there have been marked differences in the performance of pupils at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In the period 2003 to 2006, standards rose markedly in national assessments at the end of Year 2 and in 2006 were well above average. Results declined equally sharply in the national tests at the end of Year 6 to being below average and the school missed its targets. This reflected inadequate achievement by this cohort. In particular, the percentage of pupils attaining the highest level 5 fell sharply.

The school has improved its procedures for tracking the progress of pupils. Its analysis confirms that there has been underperformance in each of Years 3 to 6. The school has taken very robust, effective action. One of the most successful teachers in Key Stage 1 has been redeployed to Key Stage 2 classes and given a lead role. This has helped to raise standards in these classes. The determined, whole-school approach is paying dividends. However, the older pupils have not made up all the gaps in their knowledge. Consequently, despite the good progress now, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are average and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make the same progress as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a secure sense of what constitutes right and wrong. Their good knowledge of other cultures and beliefs is reflected in their tolerance and respect for others. The school council is effective and feels that its views are valued. For instance, it has been instrumental in devising and implementing the 'trim trail' in the playground. Pupils contribute well to the community. Pupils can articulate the healthy eating options they can choose and take advantage of the many sporting opportunities provided by the school. They have good computer skills but their average literacy and numeracy competencies mean that they are only satisfactorily prepared for going on to secondary schools.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are consistently good which means that pupils now make good progress. The difference between the quality of teaching for the younger and the older pupils has been successfully addressed. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make effective use of interactive whiteboards to provide stimulus and make the lessons interesting for pupils. Pupils speak highly of the imaginative starters to lessons in mathematics. For instance, in a Year 6

lesson, pupils thoroughly enjoyed the activities involving sound, rhythm and a dance routine to help pupils to see a mathematical pattern. Consequently, pupils have very positive attitudes to mathematics. Teachers manage their classes well and have nurtured good relationships with pupils. As a result, pupils come to lessons prepared to work. Teachers vary in their effectiveness in setting challenging work for all the abilities in their classes. In the best lessons this is achieved by excellent use of teaching assistants. They are involved in the planning for a lesson and so are very clear what is expected of them when they work with groups. The quality of marking varies but is never less than satisfactory.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with good features. In the Foundation Stage there is a good balance of activities but outdoor play resources are too limited. The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils well in Key Stage 1. In the last year it has been enhanced in Key Stage 2 and support for gifted and talented pupils is now satisfactory and improving. Provision for personal, social and health education is good throughout the school and contributes very positively to pupils' good personal development. The school has recently achieved Activemark. Providing opportunities for pupils to be creative is a strength of the school and is reflected in the pupils' good standards in music, art and drama. There has been a very clear focus on improving basic skills in mathematics, science and writing to tackle underachievement and this is being successful. The school has identified that there are too few opportunities for pupils to conduct their own investigations in science but this is being addressed. However, it has meant that other initiatives have been delayed. For instance, the school plans next year to introduce a topic-based approach in order to enable pupils to make better links between subjects. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and after-school clubs which are attended well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has robust safeguarding procedures and consequently the pupils feel safe. Pupils understand the rules well and say there is a good balance between rewarding good behaviour and clear sanctions to address the occasional bad behaviour. Staff are well informed about what to do if they have any concerns. Consequently, pupils say they trust the adults and that there is always someone they can go to if they have a worry. The school makes good efforts to involve parents in their children's learning and has strengthened communications with them significantly this year. There are good links with other agencies to support vulnerable children. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities has improved this year and is now good. Pupils have appropriate individual plans which are reviewed termly. In most instances the targets set are appropriate and challenging although a few parents feel they are not specific enough. Pupils generally know their targets and what they have to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

There is general agreement that the school has turned the corner since the arrival of the new headteacher. A local authority adviser summed this up, 'she has done a magnificent job in pulling together a staff that was somewhat demoralised.' She has used well the good practice in Key Stage 1 to bring about significant improvements in Key Stage 2. The new senior leaders

are making very effective contributions in their areas of responsibility. This is a very united staff and morale is high. A major reason for the marked progress this year is that policies are implemented consistently by all staff. There is a thorough monitoring of the quality of teaching linked to further professional development for teachers. The evaluation does not pay sufficient attention to the learning of the pupils, however. The use of performance data is satisfactory. It is used well to provide extra support to pupils who have dips in their performance. The school is at an early stage in using its own data to analyse trends and to inform decision making. Most of the self-evaluation is carried out by senior managers. This is set to change, however. Middle managers are settling into their new roles. They are enthusiastic, have researched their areas well and have the capacity to make a very significant contribution. The governors provide good support and challenge to the school and hold it to account well.

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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
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	2
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	3
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	2
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	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?	2
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?	2

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?	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	3
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

13 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cookham Rise Primary School, Maidenhead, SL6 9JF

Thank you very much for the help that you gave us when we inspected your school. You spoke enthusiastically about the improvements since the headteacher arrived last year. You tell us that you enjoy school very much, feel safe and that behaviour has improved. There is little or no bullying and you get on with one another very well.

You will know that your last inspection asked for important improvements to be put in place. The school has done that. As a result the school is satisfactory and good in several respects. We think that it is improving quickly and will be good overall quite soon now. One year has not been quite long enough for the headteacher and governors to do all that they wish to improve in the school. Some other things that we like about the school are that:

- you behave well and look after one another
- you develop into mature, responsible young people
- you have good teachers
- the school is led very well by the new headteacher
- you are now doing well in your lessons.

There are three ways in which we have asked the school to improve things further.

- Ensure that the older pupils do as well as they can in English, mathematics and science.
- Ensure that the new subject leaders can do the job fully.
- Use the data it collects to ensure that all groups and classes are making good progress.

We wish you continuing success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Barry Jones Lead inspector