

# Coombe Hill Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102567
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kingston Upon Thames
<b>Inspection number</b>	308053
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Coussins

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	270
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Yuki Konishi-Dukes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sarah Hobhouse
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 June 2004
<b>School address</b>	Coombe Lane West Kingston Upon Thames KT2 7DD
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8942 9481
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8949 7496

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards; teaching and learning; and, leadership and management.

Evidence was gathered from performance data, school information and records and pupils' work. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, staff and governors also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

## Description of the school

Coombe Hill is a larger than average infant school. Just under half of the pupils come from White British families and half from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of minority ethnic pupils is, therefore, higher than found nationally. The largest of these groups are from other White backgrounds and Asian or Asian British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than found nationally. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average and these mainly relate to speech, language and communication and moderate learning needs. The school has Artsmark Gold, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy School, Information and Communication Technology Mark and Active School awards

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school of which staff, pupils and their parents are, justifiably very proud. One parent wrote, 'I cannot praise enough the hard work and effort all the teachers and staff put in to make this a fantastic school.' A pupil who was literally jumping with joy and excitement in anticipation of her lesson sums up the excellent attitudes all pupils have to their learning. Their enjoyment of school is infectious and is evident in all they do. One pupil said, 'The school is great, I can't think of anything that would make it better.' Achievement is outstanding because teaching and learning are excellent. The emphasis the school gives to tailoring its teaching, curriculum and care to meet the differing learning and personal needs of every single child is exemplary and a major factor in its success. The inclusive ethos and excellent care, guidance and support all make a very positive contribution to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They develop as very well rounded individuals who are happy and confident. The outstanding quality and range of the outdoor areas provide an exceptionally stimulating environment, which has an extremely powerful impact on learning and pupils' personal skills. One parent wrote, 'This is a wonderful environment for my child to develop in. There is a strong community spirit between teachers and parents and children. The school's ethos of independent learning, building confidence and self-esteem has truly been brought out in my child for which I'm very happy.' Attendance has been above average for several years but is nearer average in the current year as a result of an increased number of families attending family events in other countries.

Behaviour is exemplary and pupils are very friendly, enthusiastic and well mannered. There is a strong sense of community within the school. The school council is very active and pupils said that adults listen to them. They relish their responsibilities and take them very seriously. Pupils feel very safe and secure and that they can always talk to an adult if there is anything they are worried about. They understand exceptionally well the need for regular exercise and a healthy, balanced diet to keep fit and well. The outstanding level of their personal and basic skills means they are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.

From average starting points, pupils reach high standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Very effective intervention and support is given to pupils to ensure that they all have the same opportunities, whatever their backgrounds, abilities or particular learning needs. As a result pupils with specific learning needs and those who are learning English as an additional language make similar progress to others. Teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning. There is an important and successful emphasis on pupils' speaking and listening skills and activities that ensure pupils learn from first hand experience.

Excellent teaching and the richness and variety of an outstanding curriculum mean that learning provides excitement and adventure and leads to high achievement academically and personally. Teachers successfully plan to meet the needs of all pupils and provide interesting and stimulating lessons. The children said that teachers help them learn by making learning fun and real. The academic and personal progress each child makes is carefully tracked so that challenging targets are set and reviewed regularly. Pupils know their targets and because of consistently effective feedback, they know how they can improve their work to achieve them. Pupils are very enthusiastic about all their learning, and particularly when they have opportunities to solve problems and carry out their own investigations. One parent commented, 'The greatest asset

of the school is its dictum that learning is fun'. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, know them and their needs exceptionally well and there are excellent relationships throughout the school.

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The headteacher is innovative and forward thinking and her outstanding leadership and management is at the heart of the school's success. She is extremely well supported by a very effective and strong team of staff. They share a commitment to meeting the personal and academic needs and aspirations of every single child and make an exceptional contribution to school improvement. The governing body provides excellent strategic leadership, supports the school very well and holds it to account most effectively for its performance. Parents support the school exceptionally well. They raise significant funds for the school and a huge number help in school and share their skills and knowledge with the pupils.

Although there was just one minor improvement point in the last inspection, the school has not rested on its laurels and it identified and succeeded in initiating many improvements. These include very successful strategies to improve pupils' learning in linking sounds and letters, increasing the number of staff to effectively support learning and further strengthening the partnership with parents. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are robust and enable staff to have a very clear view of the school's strengths and initiatives they wish to develop. The school's self-evaluation is highly effective and clearly demonstrates its relentless drive for excellence and outstanding capacity for further improvement from its existing secure and successful position.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Children get off to an excellent start in the Reception classes. They make very good progress from their average starting points in all areas of learning and by the end of the Reception Year the vast majority reach or exceed the goals expected for their age. This is because of a very well planned curriculum and outstanding teaching which helps them to achieve exceptionally well. Children and their parents benefit from a carefully planned induction process that helps children settle very well once they start school. They quickly learn to work together and develop independence in their learning. All staff work extremely well together to create an environment where children can thrive. A parent wrote, 'My child absolutely loves school and the teachers too, we are confident she is safe and well cared for and it has been wonderful to see her progress this year.'

### **What the school should do to improve further**

The school has no major issues to address and has outlined its priorities for development in its improvement plan. As well as increasing opportunities to liaise closely with the Junior School, these include a continuing focus on developing speaking and listening skills and developing subject-specific vocabulary. The inspector agrees that in order to build on its success, the school should implement these priorities.

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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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

03 September 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Coombe Hill Infant School, Kingston Upon Thames ,KT2 7DD

I am writing to let you know how much I enjoyed my visit to your school and what I found out. Thank you all for making me so welcome, for talking to me about your learning and telling me what you think about your school. I agree with you and your parents that your school is outstanding and these are the reasons why.

- Your school is a very exciting place to be and you told me that you really enjoy being there and love all the different things you can do.
- You are doing extremely well in your learning because your lessons are so interesting and they are fun.
- Your teachers know you very well and help you learn in the way that is just right for all of you. This means you learn new things very quickly.
- You are very well behaved and it was great to see you get on so well together and help each other in your work and your play.
- Everyone in the school takes excellent care of you and helps you all to do your best.
- Your headteacher and all the staff do an excellent job in running the school and know how to make it even better in the future.

I very much enjoyed reading lots of your exciting writing displayed around the school, especially your pirate stories and was very impressed with all the wonderful artwork I saw. I was very lucky to be in your assembly to see the excellent country dancing and hear your fantastic singing. It was a pleasure to see all the happy smiling faces of you and your teachers. I think they were enjoying themselves as much as you.

Thank you again for all your help and for being so friendly, polite and interesting to talk with.

My very best wishes to you all for the future.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins

Lead Inspector