

Nine Mile Ride Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109814
Local Authority	Wokingham Borough Council
Inspection number	310106
Inspection date	23 October 2008
Reporting inspector	George Rayner

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	314
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	23
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Shannon
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Stopforth
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	430 Finchampstead Road Finchampstead Wokingham RG40 3RB
Telephone number	0118 973 3118
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following areas of its work.

- How well do teachers use assessment to guide and support pupils' progress?
- What evidence can the school provide to demonstrate that care and pupils' personal development are outstanding?
- Why is performance less strong in science than English and mathematics?
- What progress is made in the early years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and what factors contribute to this?

Evidence was gathered from: lesson observations, discussion with staff, governors and pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and the school's documentation. Parents' questionnaires and additional comments were also analysed. Other aspects were not inspected in detail, but the inspectors 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

This school is larger than most primary schools. Almost all pupils have White British heritage and very few are at an early stage of learning to speak English. Ten pupils come from traveller families. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The most common needs of these pupils is related to difficulty in developing basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The present headteacher was appointed in September 2006. Registered childcare is provided on the school site, run by a separate organisation. This is after school care, called the Aftie School Club.

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. It has some outstanding features. For example, pastoral care is excellent and is an important ingredient in pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All procedures are extremely well organised and diligently carried out. Staff have regularly updated training in child protection and first aid. Excellent links with external agencies provide high quality guidance for staff and additional support for the well-being of any pupils who need this. The link with the local authority Traveller Education Service for example, has ensured that the pupils from traveller families are valued members of the school community and fully involved in all activities. The school has recently improved its procedures for tracking each pupil's progress. Many staff are using the information well to plan pupils' next steps in their learning, identify any who are not making the expected progress and provide the help that they need to catch up. This is not yet fully consistent across the school, however. For this reason, care, guidance and support are good overall.

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' learning and an excellent one to their personal development. Since the last inspection, specialist physical education teaching has been developed throughout the school and provides a wide variety of activities that greatly contribute to pupils' enjoyment and physical development. These are an important part of the curriculum's extremely good enrichment. Pupils respond by enjoying school immensely. One parent summed this up by writing, 'The fact that my son can't wait to come to school speaks for itself.' Teachers' enthusiasm and imaginative ideas succeed very well in securing pupils' interest, enjoyment and involvement. This was seen in a Year 6 literacy lesson, when pupils thoroughly enjoyed producing a 'radio programme', in which they interviewed one another on a field visit, then discussed what they had done well and what could have been even better. This made an excellent contribution to their speaking and listening skills, as well as their understanding of criteria for high quality work. Pupils show their love of school by the regular attendance and excellent behaviour of the great majority and their great enthusiasm in joining in with all that it has to offer.

The Personal Health and Social Education programme has a highly effective focus on teaching pupils how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Pupils are extremely knowledgeable about how to eat and drink sensibly and understand why this is important. They lead very active lives, with a high proportion taking part in additional sporting activities. The adults encourage pupils to be fully involved in school life and listen to their ideas. Pupils respond in exemplary fashion. Older children suggest clubs for the younger ones, then plan and lead the activities. A girl in Year 1 said that she thought the Year 4 pupils leading her art club were great! Such activities demonstrate the high levels of maturity, independence and confidence that pupils develop.

In responding to the key issue from the last inspection of needing to improve information and communication technology (ICT) provision, the school's leaders have taken specialist advice. This has resulted in significant improvement of provision and planning for computers to support pupils learning in all subjects. This further enhances pupils' enjoyment and their preparation for their futures. So also do the very good cross-curricular links between literacy, ICT and the other subjects, by allowing pupils to bring together skills and knowledge from different areas in 'real' tasks. Similar links are beginning to develop in mathematics and science, but are not yet providing such effective learning opportunities. Overall, pupils' progress in their main subjects prepares them well for their future learning.

There is significant variation between the skills and knowledge of individual pupils when they enter the school, but overall these are at expected levels. By the end of year 6, pupils achieve well by reaching above average overall standards. Standards are highest in English where, following very good progress, they are well above average and in mathematics, where good progress leads to securely above average standards. Teachers are very good at planning pupils' next steps in these subjects, in a way that helps them to make very good progress in their skills. As a result, pupils learn to express their ideas in interesting ways in a variety of writing styles. In mathematics, pupils develop a good range of skills, and use these well to independently solve problems. This is shown for example, when they make predictions, then carry out calculations to see how close they are. Standards are a little lower in science, where they are slightly above average. While overall progress is good in this subject, it is not consistent in each year. Pupils make less progress in some years than others. This is because teachers plan very good opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves by their own investigations in some classes, but not in all. The school's leaders are aware of this and are introducing improvements to make this aspect of teaching more consistent. However, while these are well-considered, and are beginning to show an impact on pupils' standards, this is yet to fully develop.

The headteacher and deputy provide a very clear vision for the future direction of the school. Newly appointed members of the senior team are already fitting in well and beginning to contribute fresh ideas on practical strategies for further improving teaching and learning. Since the last inspection, there has been considerable improvement in subject leaders' involvement in monitoring the quality of their areas. They are not yet sufficiently observing lessons to obtain first hand evidence in all subjects, however. Governors are knowledgeable and support the school well, while being willing to challenge it whenever necessary. The school has an exemplary commitment towards community cohesion, demonstrated by the recent appointment of a diversity coordinator, and succeeds extremely well in helping pupils to be secure and valued members of their community. Self-evaluation is rigorous. Strengths are recognised, but with an absence of complacency, resulting in very clear and accurate improvement priorities. Well focused strategies are being put in place to secure these. These have already had considerable impact in some areas, for example in further improving pastoral care and pupils' personal development since the last inspection. The track-record demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Effective provision for learning and development leads to good progress for children in the EYFS. By the end of the Reception year, children are working securely in all of their areas of learning. Adults are well-qualified and skilled in meeting the needs of very young children. They make full use of the indoor and outdoor accommodation to ensure an effective balance between adult-led activities and those where children learn by playing and exploring. Teachers make good use of observations to track the progress of each child on a daily basis and feed this into planning. Recent improvements in assessment are helping teachers to provide even better for children's needs. The impact is beginning to be seen on the progress of the children, with assessment records showing that this is faster than in previous years. Progress is very rapid for the children who are in the Reception class for three terms, but the school's assessment records show that, although still good, it is at a slower rate for those who enter later. Leaders

have enthusiastically and effectively embraced the new EYFS Framework. Staff speak highly of the way the leadership has supported them in acquiring new skills to help them to do this.

Provision for children's welfare is outstanding. All staff are committed to high quality care. The school is extremely well-equipped, safe and secure. The partnership with parents is exemplary. Home visits to all families ensure that all important information about each child is shared, as staff and parents collaborate in designing each child's 'individual learning journey'. As a result, children settle in very quickly and become enthusiastic learners, full of lively curiosity. They are able to sustain concentration extremely well and persevere in practical tasks. They particularly enjoyed an outstanding session, identifying and sorting shapes. The teacher's demanding approach extended their technical vocabulary and encouraged them to imagine different ways of demonstrating their understanding, for example using their own bodies to form shapes.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in science by ensuring that the rate of progress is consistent in each year.
- Use assessment information consistently well to plan the next steps in pupils' learning and ensure extra help for any who need this to make their expected progress.

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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?	2
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	2

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

10 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nine Mile Ride Primary School, Wokingham, RG40 3RB

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you. We are grateful for the help you gave, by talking to us and showing us your work. We were able to see that yours is a good school. Some things about your school are outstanding. One is the way that you are growing up. The adults are proud of you and look after you extremely well. Some of you told us that you know this, which makes you feel safe and happy. You help your teachers a lot by coming to school regularly, behaving very well, working hard and joining in with the things that they plan for you. We think that the way the older pupils put on clubs for the younger ones is really special.

You make good progress in your learning and reach standards that are higher than those in most schools. We could see that you are very good at English and enjoyed reading some of the interesting things that you have written. While you are also good at science, your teachers know that you can be even better. This is because they give you very good opportunities to carry out investigations in some classes, but not in all. We have asked them to make these as good in every class as they are in the best.

The teachers help you a lot by teaching you well. They often have really good ideas for exciting things to do. We know that you enjoy these and work even harder than usual. In most lessons, the teachers are good at finding out how well each pupil is working. They use this to give you all work that is just right for you and exactly the help that you need to improve. This is not quite as good in all classes though. So we have asked the teachers to make all lessons as good as the very best in this also.

Although your school is so good already, the headteacher and other adults still want to make it even better. They have some good ideas for doing this and we know that you will continue to help them in the same way that you have in the past. Very well done to you all and very best wishes for your future lives.

Yours sincerely

George Rayner

Lead Inspector