

Robert Piggott CofE Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109989
Local Authority	Wokingham Borough Council
Inspection number	310166
Inspection date	18 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Steven Hill

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	129
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Graham Howe
Headteacher	Mrs Sally Ann Akers
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2003
School address	Beverley Gardens Wargrave Reading RG10 8ED
Telephone number	0118 940 2414
Fax number	0118 940 1571

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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: the curriculum, pupils' progress, their personal development and how the school promotes this, and the provision and standards in the Foundation Stage.

Evidence was gathered from the school's documentation, observations of lessons, break-times and assembly, discussions with pupils, staff and governors, and the results of national assessments.

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 its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a small infant school whose pupils come from Wargrave village or from other villages nearby. About 80% of pupils are of White British heritage, with the rest coming from a range of minority ethnic groups. Almost all pupils have English as a home language, and none are at the early stages of speaking English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD) is broadly average, although it varies considerably from year to year. Few of these pupils have high levels of need. The majority of them have some difficulties with basic literacy and numeracy, or have emotional difficulties. The school has won a number of awards including Healthy Schools status and Activemark, and it is currently in the process of renewing its Gold Artsmark award.

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. Pupils make good progress because of good teaching. Their personal development is outstanding because of the excellent provision for their care, support and guidance.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and their behaviour is excellent. Very positive relationships amongst each other and with staff, and consistent, clear expectations from adults across the school, support this well. Just as importantly, the outstanding curriculum provides pupils with such a range of exciting things to do that they throw themselves whole-heartedly into their work. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent because the school develops this so sensitively. In lessons and assemblies, teachers consistently challenge pupils to reflect on values and important issues, in ways that they are able to relate to their everyday lives. Pupils contribute extremely well to the life of the community, both within and beyond the school, for example in their involvement in events at the church and in the village. They have exceptionally good collaborative skills, sharing ideas in groups or pairs very effectively. One said, 'Other children help you if there is a problem.' Pupils also show high levels of independence when required. Parents greatly appreciate the strong pastoral aspects of the school's work, one writing, 'The school radiates with warmth and happiness.' Pupils agree, one saying that the school '...makes me feel safe and happy.' The very strong partnership with parents, as well as with other schools and a range of outside agencies, contributes to the excellent care provided.

The good teaching is based on consistently good classroom management. A pupil in Year 2 accurately identified that 'Teachers explain everything really well.' Teachers make good use of information and communication technology (ICT) in clarifying their explanations, and pupils are given very good opportunities to use ICT themselves. Lessons are firmly based on practical activities, and pupils are given very good opportunities to discuss their work together. These factors strongly support good achievement in a range of subjects, and pupils' excellent social skills. Teachers make good use of the school's improved assessment systems to match work to pupils' different needs. Pupils are keen to meet the 'challenges' that teachers set for them. Skilled teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' progress, particularly for those pupils who would otherwise struggle with their work, and those who have emotional or social difficulties.

Attainment on entry is broadly average. Achievement is consistently good and standards by the end of Year 2 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Some variations in results of national assessments from year to year are due to the different abilities of different cohorts. For example, results in 2007 were exceptionally high. The standards of current pupils in Year 2, whilst above average, are not as high this, but their achievement is just as good in the light of their starting points. The overall trend in achievement is upwards. The inspection also revealed examples of good standards in speaking and listening, in science, singing, dance and, particularly, in art.

The school has good systems for tracking pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science, and uses this information well to identify if any are not doing as well as they should. Staff then make good use of a range of effective intervention strategies to give these pupils the help they need. This is particularly effective in helping pupils who find literacy and numeracy difficult to

make good progress. Last year, this helped all pupils to reach the expected levels by the end of Year 2.

The exciting and wide-ranging curriculum is a major strength of the school. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, and visits out and visitors to the school boost both achievement and pupils' enjoyment. Exceptionally good provision for art and design is evident in the huge variety of high quality work on display throughout the school. This is just one example of the strong provision in the arts. Very good provision for personal, social and emotional education is evident in specific lessons but also permeates all work and play in the school. Pupils' devising of class rules mean they are all committed to following them, and do so well. Their good understanding of social and moral issues is further illustrated in their thoughtful list of rules for the animals on Noah's Ark. Excellent provision to help pupils' understand about healthy lifestyles is very effective, so they are knowledgeable about healthy eating, and participate enthusiastically in exercise.

Good leadership and management account for the school's many successes. The headteacher's excellent leadership has produced a strong team of staff who are focused resolutely on pupils' achievement and personal development. A key factor is the excellent self-evaluation, which means the school is extremely well placed to improve in the future. The school constantly evaluates what it does and the resultant outcomes for pupils, and is resolute in seeking improvements. Rigorous monitoring of lessons and other elements of provision by senior staff is followed by careful feedback and training, so provision is constantly improving. The setting of very challenging targets, based on the improved assessment systems, has successfully raised achievement, notably in writing, and for boys. Subject leaders work hard to provide useful advice to colleagues. Until recently, most teachers have not had much opportunity to work alongside each other to share their considerable expertise. The school has prioritised this as an area to be developed. Governors have a good understanding of the school because they have well-developed systems in place, and support its work well.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get a good start to their education in the two Reception classes. Very good relationships with the adults and the careful programme of induction mean that children settle quickly and happily. They make good progress, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development, because of good teaching. A good balance is drawn between sessions directed by the adults and opportunities for children to choose for themselves from an exciting range of practical activities. Good opportunities are provided for developing early writing skills, and children take these up eagerly. Adults are particularly skilled at intervening in children's play, to develop their understanding and challenge them to think and talk about what they are doing. Children show high levels of independence and good relationships with each other. They get on sensibly by themselves, even when all the adults are focussed on helping other groups.

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement plans for teachers to work alongside each other in the classroom, to share expertise and so improve provision and achievement.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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?	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	1
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?	2
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

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 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	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

28 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Robert Piggott CofE Infant School, Reading, RG10 8ED

Thank you for your extremely friendly welcome when I visited your school. You told me that it is a good school, and I agree. One of the best things about the school is you! Your behaviour is excellent, you get on really well with each other and with the adults, and you work together extremely well. These are some of the other things that impressed me.

- You make good progress because your teachers are good at helping you to learn.
- The standard of your work in reading, writing and mathematics is good.
- Your artwork is stunning, and I thought your singing and your work in dance were very good, too.
- The adults keep a careful eye on how you are getting on, and make sure that anyone who needs extra help gets it. They look after you really well.
- You get lots of exciting and interesting things to do, so you really enjoy learning.
- The adults are good at organising the school and are always looking at ways to make it better.

I have agreed with Mrs Akers that, to make the school even better in future, the teachers will spend more time visiting each other's classrooms, so they can give each other tips about how to help you learn even more.

Thank you again for your help, and I hope that you carry on enjoying school. I am sure you will, especially if you carry on being so sensible, and working so hard to meet the challenges that teachers set for you.

Best wishes,

Steven Hill

Lead Inspector