

Potley Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116059
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312164
Inspection date	16 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Elisabeth Linley HMI

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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	289
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Helen Wray
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Fletcher
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2003
School address	Potley Hill Road Yateley GU46 6AG
Telephone number	01252 876106
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement in Key Stage 1, boys' achievement in English, the academic guidance provided for pupils to do their best and the effectiveness of target setting. Evidence for the inspection was gathered from observation of lessons, the pupils' work, discussion with pupils, staff, some parents and the chair of governors, plus a scrutiny of school documents and parent questionnaires. The curriculum was an aspect of the school's work that was not investigated in detail; however, the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessment of its quality was not justified.

Description of the school

Potley Hill Primary School is larger than most primary schools. Most pupils who attend live beyond the immediate location of the school. The majority of pupils are from a White British cultural heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified by the school as having learning difficulties is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

When you walk into Potley Hill Primary School you can not help but be impressed by the beautiful displays of the pupils' work. They represent the outstanding curriculum and exciting opportunities provided for children to learn, to achieve and to reach high standards. Pupils say that their school is a good place to be. They say they have fantastic sporting opportunities and extra curricular activities and that their lessons are fun. Pupils know that they attend a good school where each child is valued and cared for by staff who show outstanding commitment to their development.

Potley Hill Primary School has a number of very good features. Pupils' personal development and well-being are excellent. One parent writes, 'I am very pleased with the school, especially the behaviour of the children'. Parents are correct in their evaluation of pupils' behaviour; it is outstanding as are their attitudes to work and the relationships they form with each other and with the adults in school. The pupils' ability to work collaboratively and in teams is of a very high standard and contributes particularly well to the preparation of skills they will need in later life. Pupils demonstrate a very good understanding of what it means to keep healthy and they know the importance of staying safe. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

The care, guidance and support that pupils receive are of a high quality. Excellent partnerships are formed with others to help provide for pupils' different needs. Guidance for pupils' academic development is good. Teachers track pupils' progress well and are becoming more confident in their assessment of pupils' attainment. Greater consistency and reliability of their assessments are now required to aid the setting of both realistic and challenging targets. Nonetheless, it is the setting of challenging targets, coupled with good teaching and learning, that have contributed well to the good progress that pupils make whilst at school.

Most children start school with skills and abilities that are above what might normally be expected for their age. Pupils' achievement is good over time and when they leave school the majority attain very high standards in English, mathematics and science. However, this path of achievement has been uneven in different parts of the school. In 2005 and 2006, the standards attained in reading, writing and mathematics by pupils in Year 2 were not as good as they might have been. Even so, when compared to their starting points, most pupils made at least satisfactory progress and some achieved well. This picture of achievement is similar to that seen in Years 3 and 4. However, in 2007, standards in Year 2 in reading writing and mathematics improved and were above average overall. The 2007 Year 6 national test results in English, mathematics and science were once again very high. They were particularly good at the higher level in English, although girls outperformed boys by a bigger than usual gap. This gap was replicated in Year 2, where boys did not attain as well as girls at the higher levels in reading and writing. The school has already begun to tackle this issue in Key Stage 1 by organising morning reading times with parents and other adults and by improving resources to meet the interests of boys. In discussion, boys commented on the new books with approval.

Without doubt, the significant strengths in teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 have contributed to the very high standards that are consistently reached by pupils in Year 6. During the inspection, all teachers were seen questioning pupils effectively to promote their thinking, learning and achievement. In a Year 5 and 6 science lesson, the teachers' questioning was outstanding. Pupils conferred in their groups to consider their predictions of the decomposition

of a strawberry. They considered the 'variable' and the 'constant' of their experiment and the teacher's interaction with the pupils furthered their thinking and reasoning skills very well. It is no wonder that pupils enjoy school so much and that their attendance is very good.

Potley Hill Primary School is led and managed well. The headteacher has very high expectations of everyone: herself, staff and pupils alike. She provides a very good strategic lead for the school and is well supported by her new leadership team. Self-evaluation is effective; there is a strong focus on pupils attaining high standards but there is recognition too of where pupils' achievement can still be improved. Governors work well with staff to ensure that they keep a good overview of the schools' work. The governors' clear focus on self-evaluation, led very well by the chair, means that governors are clear about the skills and expertise that they can offer to the school. As a team, staff and governors have worked hard to improve since the last inspection; as a team they demonstrate very good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Parents say that their children settle quickly when they start school and that 'the teachers are extremely approachable and caring'. The very positive relationships established between staff, children and parents help children to develop in confidence as they learn new routines. They quickly become able to make independent choices and when needed they listen carefully as they work with their teacher. They learn to get on well with each other as they work and play and their behaviour is very good. Although, owing to staff absence through ill health, the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, the quality of provision is good overall. It is planned effectively to meet the children's needs and, as a result, they achieve well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve boys' early literacy skills to aid their achievement at the higher levels in reading and writing.
- Ensure that teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment are consistent and reliable in order to aid the setting of targets for pupils' improved 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	1
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	1
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 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	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

1 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Potley Hill Primary School, Yateley, GU46 6AG

As you know, I visited your school recently. I was pleased to be able to talk to you and to find out what you like about your school. You said that you particularly enjoy the sporting activities and the many extra curricular activities available for you. You like the responsibilities you are given and the opportunities to contribute to your school community by being a buddy, a prefect or school councillor. It was clear to me that your behaviour is excellent and that you treat others with respect and courtesy. This reflects the very good care that you are given by everyone in school.

You told me that lessons are fun and you enjoy them. When I visited your lessons I was particularly impressed by the way you responded to your teachers' questions and the way you thought carefully to make sure you answered them well. With the good teaching and learning that takes place in your school most of you make good progress and by the time you reach Years 5 and 6 you are achieving particularly well and attain very high standards in English, mathematics and science. Your teachers are aware that some of the boys do not always do as well as they could in reading and writing. They have already begun to tackle this in Key Stage 1 by organising morning reading times with parents and other adults and by buying more books to interest you. Teachers are also getting better at assessing exactly what progress you are making in your different subjects and this will help them to set the right targets for each of you so that you can all achieve your best.

So, these are things that I would like you and your teachers to work on to make your good school even better:

- For boys in particular to work hard on your reading and writing as soon as you start school so that you can achieve as well as you can in English.
- For teachers to assess your work well so that they can set targets to help you improve and achieve very well in all your work.

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited you. I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Elisabeth Linley HMI