

Oakfield Church of England Aided Primary School, Ryde

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 118193 |
| Local Authority | Isle of Wight |
| Inspection number | 312841 |
| Inspection dates | 19–20 March 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Kath Beck |

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

| | |
|---|---|
| Type of school | First |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4–9 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 169 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Maureen Wilkins |
| Headteacher | Mrs Laura Fairhurst |
| Date of previous school inspection | 11 March 2003 |
| School address | Gassiot Green Great Preston Road Ryde PO33 1DR |
| Telephone number | 01983 562085 |
| Fax number | 01983 612014 |

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Age group | 4–9 |
| Inspection dates | 19–20 March 2008 |
| Inspection number | 312841 |

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small school situated on the edge of Ryde. A high proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The number starting and leaving at other than the usual times is high. Few come from minority ethnic backgrounds or speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities is above the national average. Hardly any have a statement of special educational need. Of these pupils, problems include behavioural, moderate learning or profound and multiple learning difficulties. There is a nurture group for pupils with behavioural difficulties. There are twice as many boys as girls in Years 1, 2 and 4. Between 2003 and 2006, there was interruption to leadership and management. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

One parent wrote, 'My son has come on leaps and bounds this year and is really enjoying school for the first time.' Another said, 'The school has a fantastic atmosphere, a learning buzz.' These comments reflect the success of the significant developments undertaken to improve all aspects of the school since September 2006 so its overall effectiveness is satisfactory. Prior to that date national test results for pupils in Year 2 had been in decline since 2004 and were well below average, particularly in reading, in the summer of 2006. Improvements, especially in the quality of teaching and learning and flexibility in the organisation of classes led directly to results rising steeply in 2007. In that year, results were broadly average in reading, writing, and mathematics. That said the quality of teaching varies from inadequate, lacking challenge and interest, to outstanding, where all pupils are really keen to learn. This mirrors pupils' progress, although achievement for all pupils is satisfactory overall. Currently standards in Years 2 and 4 are similar to those found nationally, but there is work to do in developing pupils' reading, as well as investigative skills in mathematics and science more effectively in all classes.

High quality leadership from the headteacher has moulded all staff and governors into a team with a strong focus and determination to make a real difference to pupils' lives. Together they have brought about important changes in the conditions in which pupils learn. All have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and actions needed to bring further improvement. The impact of changes in recent months has given further impetus to all involved in the leadership and management of the school. This together with the rise in standards gives it a good capacity to improve. Concern for individual pupils' learning needs is central to driving the improvements in this school. A key priority is to help children who enter the Foundation Stage with high levels of need in their personal, social, and emotional development meet the goals set for them by the end of Reception. Outstanding practice is promoting this area of learning successfully for some children, but it is uneven in classes across the Foundation Stage so not enough children meet the expected level of attainment.

Action taken in other aspects of the school, including working in close partnership with parents and outside agencies has proved successful in promoting learners' well-being and helping them overcome barriers to their learning. Strong care and support for pupils' personal needs, especially in the nurture group, are helping them to overcome their behavioural and emotional difficulties. Assessment is being used to provide a better match of work to needs, but is not yet fully effective. Pupils are enjoying their newly introduced practical curriculum and visits to interesting places. For some, particularly boys, these changes have been a key turning point bringing about the 'buzz' of enjoyment in their learning mentioned by parents. However, not all pupils attend as often as they should and this stops them from doing as well as they could. The school has drawn up clear plans, including working with parents in a variety of constructive ways, to improve attendance.

The headteacher led many of the successful changes that have improved provision and standards over the past eighteen months, while middle managers undertook training in leadership skills. They have taken on their new responsibilities with enthusiasm, but have not yet developed their monitoring skills fully so that they can have greater impact on pupils' achievement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

In 2007, children's attainments were above the goals expected of them at the end of Reception, in communications, language and literacy and physical development. This is because considerable emphasis is placed on enabling children to read and write. Attainments were below those expected in personal, social and emotional development and mathematical development. The school recognised that children made inadequate progress in these aspects, given their low starting points and took action. High quality opportunities for children to use their initiative, make decisions, respond to challenges in their work and apply mathematical skills in practical situations are provided, but not consistently enough for all children in this key stage to reach expected levels of attainment by the end of the year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards, especially in reading and investigative skills in mathematics and science.
- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment so that pupils in all classes are engaged and challenged by their tasks and children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted more effectively in the Foundation Stage.
- Enhance the skills of middle managers so that they have greater impact on pupils' achievements.
- Implement the plans to work with parents to improve the rate of attendance.

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

Standards in Year 2, particularly in reading declined between 2004 and 2006 from average to well below average. The school identified some pupils' poor attendance, high numbers of pupils moving in and out of the school, immaturity in behaviour and emotional development, weaknesses in the curriculum and quality of teaching as the reasons for this underperformance. Also too little was being done to enable pupils with learning difficulties make appropriate progress. Standards rose sharply in 2007 to reach the average level. This resulted from the school's robust initiatives, including setting up a nurture group, implementing a more practical curriculum, and improving arrangements for pupils with moderate and profound learning difficulties in lessons. Better teaching and more flexibility in organising age and ability groups also contributed to this improvement. Scrutiny of work, information from individual education plans for pupils with a range of learning difficulties, and lesson observations show pupils' progress varies according to the quality of teaching they receive, but overall it is satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils mostly enjoy coming to school, and those who attend regularly make steady progress. Attendance is improving year by year, but a small number of parents condone unnecessary absence and these pupils fall behind in their learning. Pupils like their teachers, and want to do well. When lessons really capture their interest they work very hard and make good progress, but they become restless and distracted when activities ask too little of them. Pupils know

what they need to do to stay healthy, and most take plenty of exercise. They have a clear understanding of risks they might face, whether on the road, in the home or the playground. Usually pupils act calmly and responsibly to avoid hurting others. They are happy to take on extra tasks around the school, and appreciate the chance to put forward their ideas for school improvement, through the school council, especially about behaviour and the prevention of bullying.

Pupils have sound levels of skill in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, and work well together in small groups. These skills, together with mini-enterprises such as working in partnership with a pet shop or running a cafe; lay a good foundation for their future. The Christian ethos adds to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments that are satisfactory. Most pupils have appropriate appreciation of right and wrong. They recognise and value honesty and fairness. Because of the school's recent initiatives, their behaviour is generally calm and sociable. A small minority find difficulty in self-control. Pupils in the nurture group are aware of the need to behave in a grown up way and ensure they do not interrupt the learning of others.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Training over the past 18 months has enabled most teachers to improve their practice. Their planning takes greater account of how pupils learn best. Good lessons are imaginative, inspiring, and challenging. They enthuse pupils, especially boys who become quickly absorbed in learning. They work hard at the practical tasks provided, make some decisions for themselves, and develop a more mature attitude towards their work. In these lessons, pupils make good progress because they know where their work is leading them, what they are to achieve in the session and what comes next. While some teachers take care in their lessons to check on each child's understanding of their work and adjust the tasks when necessary, others do not. This hinders progress as pupils waste time on dull tasks, unaware of what they have to do or spend too long on work that is too easy or too hard for them. The quality of marking is not consistent in giving all pupils a clear view of what they do well and how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school's recent review of the curriculum is bringing new opportunities and challenges for the pupils. It asks teachers to plan imaginative work that calls on the pupils to think hard, and to apply important skills in new situations. Some teachers have adopted the new strategy confidently in their lessons, and pupils make good progress in learning. Others are still tentative in implementing it. This is particularly evident in mathematics and science where much of the work is over-directed, and pupils have too few opportunities to solve problems or carry out investigations. The curriculum for those with moderate and profound learning difficulties or disabilities is improving as the school is identifying and meeting each child's needs more accurately within lessons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school makes care for the pupils its top priority. It checks possible risks thoroughly, ensures pupils are safe, and makes good arrangements for minor accidents. It takes very seriously concerns about bullying, or any other harassment, and works closely with outside agencies to support pupils and their families at times of difficulty. The small numbers of particularly vulnerable pupils, including those with behavioural or profound learning difficulties receive high quality, sensitive, and understanding support from staff and from other pupils. This is indicative of the school's caring ethos and is a particular strength. New policies and procedures relating to behaviour are beginning to impact pupils' personal development. Staff have refined the methods they use to check the progress each child makes so they can quickly identify those who are slipping behind, or who need extra help. An important priority for the school in raising the quality of teaching and care, guidance and support is to ensure that all teachers make best use of this good information in planning work for pupils of different abilities and needs.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Strong and effective leadership by the headteacher and good self-evaluation at all levels of leadership and management means there is a realistic and honest picture of the school. Governors take an active role in its strategic development and have clear plans to work with parents in a constructive way to improve attendance. Together with the headteacher, they have made difficult decisions resulting in recent successful improvements in the quality of provision for many pupils. The effective use of challenging targets is improving pupils' progress. The focus on reading recovery is beginning to support pupils who find this difficult. Teachers are using assessment to match to needs, but this is not the case in all classes. Middle managers are beginning to utilise their particular talents to raise standards in literacy, numeracy, and problem solving, but there is work to do in raising their skills in monitoring to ensure consistency of provision across the school.

The school's initiatives to involve parents in their children's education in a variety of ways are proving successful. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive, especially those whose children have particular behavioural or learning difficulties and the care and provision the school makes for them. Parents know the children come first and rightly appreciate all the school does for them.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|--|-----------------------|

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 |
| 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? | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |

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 | 3 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 3 |

Personal development and well-being

| | |
|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 3 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 3 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 3 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners | 3 |
| 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 | 2 |

The quality of provision

| | |
|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 3 |
| 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? | 3 |

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? | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 3 |
| 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

01 April 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Oakfield Church of England Aided Primary School, Ryde, Ryde, PO33 1DR

Thank you for making us welcome in Oakfield School and for helping us with our work. We really enjoyed talking to you and hearing your views. You have a super headteacher and we know that you like many of the changes that she has made, along with the governors, your teachers and assistants, in the past year. You told us you really enjoyed being in school when the lessons were exciting, but you lost concentration when the activities were not interesting enough. We were very impressed that some of you are so keen to learn you like to find out more about your projects, such as Tutankhamen or running a pet shop that you carry on finding out information at home. We were also very impressed, as were many of your parents, by the way the younger pupils organised and ran the canteen during our visit. The grown ups look after you really well and care for you if you are worried. You are considerate and kind to your classmates too when they need your help.

Your school is satisfactory. To make it better we have asked your teachers to:

- help you to improve your reading and the ways you solve problems in mathematics and carry out investigations in science
- give you interesting and challenging things to do in all your lessons and help the youngest children to use their own ideas and make decisions about their work
- share their ideas and assist each other even more to make sure you all enjoy being in school and do as well as you can all the time
- work with your parents to make sure you come to school more often.

You can help by behaving well, listening carefully, and trying to do your best all the time.

Yours sincerely

Kath Beck

Lead Inspector