

Shottermill Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124980
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315108
Inspection date	13 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	167
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jim Edwards
Headteacher	Mrs Cathy Cooke
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lion Lane Shottermill Haslemere GU27 1JF
Telephone number	01428 642902
Fax number	01428 644274

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). In addition, the following issues were investigated:

- What are the key elements in the school gaining such exceptionally high standards?
- Does the EYFS curricular provision ensure that there is an appropriate balance between adult- and child-initiated activities?
- What are the improvements in leadership and management since the previous inspection?

Evidence was gathered from the school's analysis of pupils' progress, a scrutiny of samples of their work and observations of pupils in lessons. Discussions were held with staff, governors and pupils. In addition, the responses of parents' questionnaires were analysed and their comments taken into account. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated 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

Shottermill Infant is smaller than most primary schools and is oversubscribed. The EYFS consists of two parallel Reception classes and there are two further classes in each of Year 1 and 2. Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage and none are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Most of these pupils have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school has gained the following awards: Healthy Schools, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Sports Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Shottermill Infant is an outstanding school and this is reflected in the overwhelmingly positive views of parents. These views are summarised by the comment: 'The school is very much a part of the community and there is a delightful spirit of belonging and care. My daughter has a positive enthusiasm due to the positive encouragement from her teacher.' There has been an across-the-board improvement since the previous inspection and this has been led exceptionally well by the headteacher. Her outstanding leadership had led to exceptionally good teaching and curriculum and excellent care, guidance and support. Consequently, achievement has improved and the vast majority of pupils are making outstanding progress.

Children enter the EYFS with skills above those typically found. They make very good progress, and, as a consequence, by the time that they enter Year 1, almost all pupils reach the expected learning goals and many exceed them. Progress is excellent in Year 1 and 2 and, by the time they leave the school, pupils' standards are exceptionally high. In the three years since the previous inspection, standards have been exceptionally high in reading, writing and mathematics in every year. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked; any pupils in danger of slipping behind are very quickly identified and good programmes of support are put into place. As a result, in both the 2007 and 2008 national tests all groups of pupils, including those that find learning difficult and the more capable pupils, made outstanding progress to meet their very challenging targets in reading, writing and mathematics.

These exceptionally high standards are also reached due to the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum, both of which are outstanding. The key strengths in lessons include very high expectations, very good subject knowledge and brisk and lively lesson pace. In addition, teachers have excellent relationships with the pupils, listen to them very well and ask penetrative questions that, as well as making them think, also enable teachers to pinpoint how well they have learned. Pupils, in turn, listen carefully to the teachers, thoroughly enjoy lessons and follow instructions well. Because teachers make lesson objectives clear and provide excellent opportunities for pupils to check their own learning, pupils know not only what they are expected to do but also what they have to do to meet their objectives. 'We use success criteria to help us to meet our target', said one Year 2 pupil. The very wide range of outstanding opportunities for enriching learning includes the availability of French and a wide range of sporting activities, including those taught by specialist coaches, each week for all pupils. The curriculum enhances personal development exceptionally well through a very well-implemented programme of personal, social and health education.

Parents were unanimous in their support for many aspects of the school, including their children enjoying school, making good progress, having good behaviour, staying safe and being well cared for. However, a few parents said that they felt that communication between them and the school is not good. This was investigated, and there is no evidence to support this concern. Communication with parents is better than that found in many schools, with the weekly newsletters and invitations for parents to support learning in school. There is also an annual questionnaire seeking parents' views and excellent procedures to ensure that their children are inducted well into the school, and that parents understand the routines and expectations of the EYFS. Parent workshops have enabled them to understand the approach that the school takes, such as the recent evening that outlined how to support mathematical development. Taken together with the regular parents' evenings, these encompass many aspects of effective practice.

The excellent care, guidance and support have a positive impact on pupils' personal development. All safeguarding requirements are met in full, so pupils rightly say that they feel very safe and secure at school. Support given for pupils with additional learning needs is outstanding and leads to their excellent progress and greatly increased confidence. Pupils' behaviour is excellent, they have highly positive attitudes to learning and to each other, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. This is reflected in pupils' very high levels of attendance. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility, although there is no formal school council currently in place. However, older pupils say that they enjoy looking after younger children, 'particularly when they are wounded', commented a serious Year 2 pupil! The high levels of attainment, linked to excellent collaborative and personal development, mean that pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their move to the junior school.

The quality of leadership and management has improved considerably since the previous inspection, and is now outstanding and a further key factor in the improved standards. The staff work closely as a team, with all teachers making a strong contribution to the very effective strategies that check both the school's provision and also pupils' progress. Experienced and well-organised subject leaders ensure that governors are kept fully informed about the school's effectiveness. Governance has also improved very considerably since the previous inspection. As well as having a clear understanding of the school's strengths and development points, governors also sensitively challenge and question to ensure that the school's provision and standards continue to advance. The improvements made since the previous inspection are a clear indication of the outstanding capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The skills and knowledge of children when they enter the EYFS are above those expected nationally. They make better than expected progress in most areas of learning in their Reception Year. Children enjoy their learning. For example, in story time a class performed the story of the 'Three Little Pigs' with appropriate actions. They showed great enthusiasm and good clarity in their language. All children show good progress in developing letters and sounds. The early morning 10 minute routine encourages every child to reinforce their learning and move on to recognising and writing new letters and phrases. The electronic whiteboards are used well. In a problem-solving game on shapes, children eagerly strode up to the whiteboard to reveal and identify simple shapes.

However, there is an imbalance between adult-led activities and children's opportunities to play and explore, both indoors and outside. The school has begun to address this through 'creativity' days, but this does not secure the children's need for independent activities and staff recognise that there is more to do to improve their approach.

Children are able to sustain concentration well when sitting on the carpet and they persevere with practical tasks. They work cooperatively in small groups, discussing what they have to do and respecting each other's points of view. Their lively curiosity is stimulated by the curriculum. For example, a child asked, 'What is the difference between white and brown sugar?' when cooking gingerbread men.

Teachers and adults in the classroom plan and work well together in meeting the needs of the children. They make good use of observations to track the progress of each child. The EYFS area is well equipped, safe and secure, enabling all children to learn effectively. Relationships are good. Parents are very supportive. Each morning a teacher is in the playground to ensure

that parents can share any concerns with staff. The EYFS is well led and managed. Leaders have high aspirations and they evaluate provision continually.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that there are further planned opportunities, both in the classrooms and outdoors, for children in the EYFS to choose activities for themselves on a regular and consistent basis.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	1

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	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

26 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shottermill Infant School, Haslemere, GU27 1JF

We really enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you very much for the friendly way you welcomed us and for your help in finding out about your school.

Both you and your parents told us that you love school and that you feel safe and well cared for. We are not surprised. Yours is an excellent school and everybody who works there tries hard to help you to do well. Your teachers work hard to make sure that lessons are interesting and exciting. Your headteacher has done an excellent job to make sure that everyone helps you all to work and play together in such a friendly way and to make the school successful. We particularly enjoyed your celebration assembly and we were very impressed with your behaviour. Your teachers help you to learn exceptionally well and also make sure that everyone feels part of the family of your school.

You work hard in lessons so that you learn lots of new things. Your progress is excellent and you attain high standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

We have asked your teachers to do one thing. This is to make sure that there are more chances planned for the children in the Reception classes to choose activities for themselves both in the classroom and outdoors.

Thank you once again for being so helpful to us.

With very best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler

Lead Inspector