

Byfleet Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124999
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315116
Inspection dates	20–21 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Andrew Saunders

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	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Martin Lock
Headteacher	Mrs Myra Stevens
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2003
School address	King's Head Lane Byfleet West Byfleet KT14 7AT
Telephone number	01932 403116
Fax number	01932 410201

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Byfleet Primary is an average sized school with rising numbers. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals, from minority ethnic groups or whose first language is believed not to be English, are all lower than average. The proportion of pupils with moderate learning difficulties is above average. The school has a Silver International Green Apple award and Investors in People recognition.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school, where pupils reach standards which are broadly average by the end of Year 6. While teachers know the pupils very well and provide good care, guidance and support, they do not always challenge pupils sufficiently to work independently. As a result, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and lead to steady progress for pupils. The school is highly regarded in the local community and pupils are welcoming and friendly. The school is justly proud of their environment and the grounds are used well for learning.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall from their starting points. Children enter the Foundation Stage with capabilities below the level expected for their age and make good progress to reach most of the goals set for children of that age. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 but this slows down during Key Stage 2 where it is patchy. Sometimes teaching encourages pupils to think for themselves and be more independent in their learning, and this leads to good progress. This is not the case consistently and standards in Key Stage 2 have declined in recent years, particularly in English. Pupils who find learning more difficult are ably supported by the well-informed teaching assistants.

The good provision for pupils' care, guidance and support means that their personal development and well-being is good. Pupils enjoy their learning, behave well and are happy to come to school. They are caring and enjoy taking on responsibilities. They know what to do to stay healthy and how to keep themselves safe. Parents feel that the school takes good care of their children and that the teachers are approachable and know their children well. A new approach to planning the curriculum around topics is working well and contributes towards pupils' enjoyment of their lessons, as well as helping them to see the relevance of their learning.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The senior leaders have ensured this is a happy school and that pupils are well cared for; parents commented on how well the headteacher knows all the children. The school have successfully tackled the issues from the previous inspection, including raising standards at Key Stage 1. However, they have not been as effective at arresting the decline in standards in Key Stage 2 from their previous high levels. School leaders' monitoring and evaluation are not sharply focused on improving teaching and learning. Governors are supportive of the school and have been particularly successful in managing difficult budgetary issues. The track record of improvement from the last inspection indicates a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The majority of children start in the Reception class with less confidence in communication, language and literacy skills and mathematical development, than might be expected. Emphasis on pupils' personal development means they settle well into school and become happy and confident learners. There is a well-planned mix of teacher-led and child initiated activities that broaden children's experiences and help them learn effectively. Thoughtful use of the stimulating indoor and outdoor areas ensures children are provided with good learning opportunities that meet their needs. Staff carefully track children's progress and help them develop independence. Along with good teaching, this enables them to make good progress in most areas. New strategies to tackle reading, writing and calculation are beginning to accelerate progress even further but it is too early for them to be fully effective. By the end of the year most pupils have

made up ground in the areas they needed to and are well prepared to be part of their learning community.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate pupils' progress in Key Stage 2, particularly in English.
- Ensure teaching provides challenge and opportunities to learn independently so that pupils achieve as well as they can.
- Improve the quality and depth of monitoring and evaluation in order to raise achievement and improve teaching and learning.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory but with areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Until recently, standards at the end of Year 6 have been above average. However, they have been declining more recently. Pupils performed better in mathematics and science than English; in particular, fewer pupils reached the higher levels in English. Recent strategies to improve writing are beginning to show evidence that they are working. Progress in lessons is at least satisfactory and, where teaching provides more challenge and independence, pupils make better progress. Pupils from ethnic minorities make similar progress to their peers. Those with moderate learning difficulties also make satisfactory progress, and some do even better.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils like school and take part enthusiastically in all the activities on offer to them. As one pupil said, with the smiles and nods from others, 'Byfleet Primary is very welcoming'. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and behave very well; they say there is very little bullying. Pupils are confident that adults will help them if they have any concerns or worries. They make healthy choices at lunchtime and greatly enjoy the opportunities to run around and take part in sporting activities. Pupils take their responsibilities as members of the school council and as monitors seriously and are keen to talk about the different ways in which they can make a difference to the school community. They said that Byfleet is a haven for wildlife, reflecting their lively interest in the natural world. They love the opportunities to explore the pond and spinney areas, describing their camps with great pride. Older pupils help through their role as Buddies to the youngest children. Pupils express sympathy and concern for those less fortunate, such as those affected by recent disasters. Pupils contribute well to the wider community, for example by raising funds for charity. The preparation for the next stage of their education is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In too many lessons, teaching relies heavily on the input from the teacher. Pupils then make less progress than might be expected of them, as they have to wait to be told what to do next.

Teachers use the topic framework to ensure lessons are fun and put the development of skills into context for the pupils. Marking is used well in some instances to help pupils know what to do to improve but this is inconsistent. In other cases, although mistakes are noted there is little advice as to what to do to bring about improvement. Too little work is completed during some lessons and, where worksheets are over-used, creativity is limited. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties are supported effectively by teaching assistants who work in close partnership with teachers but more able pupils are not consistently challenged.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Wherever possible links are being developed between subjects so that learning of skills is put into useful contexts. The school is creating more opportunities for pupils to learn through creative activities, such as role play, but there is insufficient emphasis on their independent learning skills. Special themed weeks give pupils the chance to try out and extend their skills in different contexts. Pupils greatly enjoy the good range of enrichment activities, which extend their knowledge and personal development well. They say that these make learning more fun. Pupils with learning difficulties or personal and social problems which affect their learning, are supported through a range of programmes suitable for their needs. A good range of after-school clubs, visits and visitors to the school contribute well to the curriculum. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop physical and sporting skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is a caring community and is strongly committed to the care and welfare of its pupils. This is clear in the good relationships that pervade the school. Staff know their pupils well and provide a secure and safe environment in which they can flourish. Pupils value the kind and caring ethos and this is confirmed in one pupil's comment, 'They are really good at listening to everyone and giving everyone a chance'. Academic guidance and support are developing well. Systems for assessing pupils' progress are well established and now lead to targets for each pupil in English and mathematics. These are beginning to help raise pupils' awareness of what they need to focus on in order to progress. However, they have not yet had time to arrest the decline in standards in Key Stage 2.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Senior leaders have ensured that pupils are well cared for and can learn in an interesting and safe environment. Parents have a very high regard for the leadership of the school. However, the school has been slow to react effectively to the decline in standards in Key Stage 2 and their self evaluation has been too optimistic. They have identified the need to improve writing and have put in place a range of strategies that are beginning to have an impact. Monitoring and evaluation is regular. However, school leaders do not provide sufficiently focused areas for development related to improving the impact of teaching. As a result it is not successful in ensuring that pupils are challenged and can become more independent in their learning. Some of the subject coordinators have only recently taken on their responsibility and are developing their role. They have effectively redesigned the topic-based curriculum which is good and improving. Governors are starting to provide more challenge alongside their loyal support and

are improving their understanding of the school data. Along with the leadership of the school, they have focused on ensuring pupils enjoy school and develop into confident young people. Although they have not been as rigorous in keeping standards at their previously high levels, their capacity to promote further improvement is satisfactory.

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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?	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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	3

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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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	3
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	3
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

05 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Byfleet Primary School, West Byfleet, KT14 7AT

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed chatting to so many of you and hearing about what you think about your school. You are clearly proud of what you do and enjoy learning and playing in your lovely grounds.

We think your school looks after you well and helps you to develop your confidence. You told us you enjoy coming to school and taking care of one another. You feel safe at school and know how to keep healthy. You enjoy the topic work the teachers plan for you and say that learning is fun. That is great to hear!

Your teachers are helping many of you to make the progress you should. However, we think that you could reach even higher standards, particularly by the end of Year 6, in English. We think the teachers can help you do this by making sure that all lessons help you work more independently and the school leaders can help by making sure this happens. You can also help by making sure you try to work things out for yourselves, rather than relying on the teacher to tell you what to do quite so often.

The most important thing is to continue enjoying your learning and keep working together to make your school the very best it can be.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Saunders

Lead Inspector