

Hurst Green Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125010
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315121
Inspection date	19 March 2008
Reporting inspector	David Marshall

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	98
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs E Stoughton-Harris
Headteacher	Ms L Driscoll / Mrs J Atkins
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2003
School address	Wolfs Wood Hurst Green Oxted RH8 0HJ
Telephone number	01883 712171
Fax number	01883 723749

Age group	3-7
Inspection date	19 March 2008
Inspection number	315121

© 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 an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the pupils' achievement and progress, pupils' personal development and well-being, and the effectiveness of leadership and management. In addition, evidence was gathered from discussions and school documentation to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection 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 in this report.

Description of the school

Hurst Green School is a community infant and nursery school largely serving the area of Hurst Green but with a number of families from other areas. An above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities - approximately one-third. A below average number of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Hurst Green is a good school. Since the previous inspection, the headteachers have established an excellent ethos in which pupils feel safe, valued and confident to contribute wholeheartedly to the school and local community. The care and support for pupils is excellent and as a result their personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are exemplary. Throughout the school, relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. The Easter assembly observed during the inspection was extraordinary. Not only were the Easter bonnets amazing but the enthusiastic singing, the huge number of parents present and the joy that pupils showed in the success of others was remarkable. The level of confidence shown by pupils and their ability to communicate in public were well above average for their age. As a result of the outstanding leadership and management the school goes a long way towards fulfilling its' mission statement of 'bringing out the best by caring, learning and achieving together'. Pupils and their parents are proud of this and welcome the way all are valued and as one parent wrote, 'The school produces kind and well mannered pupils and Hurst Green village should be proud to have the school providing a pivotal role within the community.'

When children start school, their skills and understanding are below those expected for their age. By the time, they enter Year 1, they have made good progress and standards are close to those expected for children of their age. National assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 show that standards have been consistently around the national average in the last five years. All pupils, whatever their ability, achieve well. The least able and most vulnerable pupils make excellent progress as they receive effective specialist support whenever it is required. The very experienced teaching assistants provide excellent support. The creation of groups for pupils with well-identified specific needs, such as those on the autistic spectrum, and others with behavioural difficulties, has been further modified to ensure that pupils not only get the individual support they need, but also have time with their class-mates to quickly catch-up with their peer group. One parent with a child with specific needs said she could not be more grateful and marvelled at the way the school 'bent over backwards to make sure my child's education was as close as possible to the others'.

The curriculum covers all subjects very well. Pupils really appreciate the many exciting additional activities. They spoke animatedly about the music band visits and 'having a go'. The teachers' use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum has improved considerably since the time of the previous inspection, and is now an integral part of their planning. The excellent monitoring by the headteachers and subject managers has enabled the quality of teaching to improve. Throughout the school, lessons are very well planned, teachers aim to make learning fun and the expectations of pupils' responses, and the pace of lessons, are good. Observations and assessments of what the pupils know and can do are now excellent. Pupils are moved on to the next stage in their learning very well through the good use of the information gained. Although teachers are clear about the most effective ways to ensure that lessons are appropriate for every pupil, there are variations in the way that activities are organised. School leaders realise that the implementation of the curriculum to make it more child-directed varies and occasionally group work is curtailed when it could continue to be effective. The headteachers are using their very effective monitoring systems to try to ensure all lessons are as relevant as they can make them.

The leadership and management of the school are excellent. The school benefits from the steadfast commitment and determination of the headteachers. An example of the strong impact

of their work is the raising of the achievement of pupils with learning difficulties. They provide highly motivated leadership, which unites all the staff in their aim to provide for every individual pupil whatever they might need. One parent wrote, 'The heads have an 'open-door' policy and I have always felt that I could talk to them at any time. There is a great team spirit at the school and all staff are approachable and friendly.' Subjects are very well managed and resources efficiently used. Governors have exceptional knowledge of the school and the local community, understand clearly their roles and responsibilities and so provide excellent support and challenge in equal measure. The school has addressed well the issues identified in the last report, provides a high level of care for all pupils and has improved the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. The school has an excellent capacity to improve further. They are aware that the exceptional grounds of the school are not yet being used to their full potential to develop pupils' skills and understanding in all areas of learning. School leaders have plans to address this development in the near future.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a very good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes where teachers plan enjoyable activities for the children. When children start school their standards are generally below those expected for their age, especially in language development. The huge level of commitment and care shown by all Foundation Stage staff is evident in the way that all children settle into the school so well and immediately begin to learn. By making a careful note of all responses and feedback, staff know the children well. The information collected is used particularly well to ensure that all children, even the least able and most vulnerable, settle happily into the routines of school. Many, from a below average start in the Nursery, are already working at the levels expected for their age. At the start of the day the children enter the classes with confidence and settle swiftly to purposeful activities. They are happy to talk and share ideas with each other and the adults. Staff are aware that the balance of teacher-directed activities and those chosen and regulated by the children themselves is not always appropriate. The opportunities for children to work and learn together through making their own choices and cooperating are sometimes limited.

What the school should do to improve further

- Throughout the school, ensure all pupils have opportunities to be involved in their own learning by consistently implementing the revised curriculum in all classes.
- Make every effort to bring to fruition the carefully put together plans for enhancing the outside learning areas.

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?	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?	2
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	3
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	1

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	2
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	2

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?	2
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?	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 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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

02 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hurst Green Infant School, Oxted, RH8 0HJ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I am very grateful for the way you shared your thoughts and feelings about school. I think you go to a good school, and you obviously enjoy most lessons and activities and contribute much in making the school a happy place to be. Your behaviour, great attitudes to work and play and the ways in which you care for one another are excellent. Many of you said how much you enjoy being at school, and how proud you are of what you can do. I am sure that you will continue to try hard so your school can be the fun place that you like, and where you can all learn.

The school is a very caring place and the staff work hard to make learning fun. I was very impressed by your enthusiasm for all of the extra activities, and the Easter bonnets on display in the assembly were amazing. The school is very well organised and your excellent headteachers and the staff make sure that everything runs smoothly. You play your part well in making decisions through the school council.

I have asked the headteachers and all staff to work as hard as they can to put in place all the plans you have made for the outside areas around the school. I have also asked them to give you all the opportunities to decide for yourselves how you can make even better progress. You must all carry on listening carefully and take note of what your teachers say. Then you will all continue to make good progress in your learning.

Finally, I would like to thank you once again for all your help. I wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

David Marshall

Lead Inspector