

Cross Farm Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125085
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315146
Inspection date	15 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Lily Evans

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	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	124
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Yvonne McLeod
Headteacher	Mrs Sian Wyn Allan
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2003
School address	Gresham Way Frimley Green Camberley GU16 6LZ
Telephone number	01252 835847
Fax number	01252 835847

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, focusing on achievement in Reception and by the end of Year 2, and investigated the following issues: differences between girls' and boys' performance in literacy and numeracy, effectiveness of assessment procedures, and the monitoring aspects of leadership and management. Other areas were not inspected in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own self-evaluation was not justified and this has been included in the report where appropriate. The inspector observed lessons, and talked with staff, governors and pupils. She examined the school's data, pupils' work and documents related to the areas of focus. Eighty-four parents' questionnaires contributed to the judgements.

Description of the school

This is a small infant school which serves the local community. An increasing number of pupils are attending from the surrounding area bringing a wider mix of pupils. Few pupils have English as an additional language; fewer than usual pupils have special educational needs. The school has gained awards for Eco-schools (silver), Partnership with Parents and Basic Skills Quality Mark. It is working towards the Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'Every activity or event that this school undertakes is wholly for the children, to aid their development and learning.' This comment by a parent is typical of many positive responses to the questionnaire sent out at the time of the inspection. This is a good school, which has had a complete change of staff and governors in the last two years, and the headteacher has been in post for three years. The headteacher and deputy head give strong leadership, set clear direction, but have yet to develop subject leaders' roles and extend the management team. They monitor teaching and learning well. They ensure that new staff quickly assimilate the whole school practice and procedures, for example, in planning, marking, assessment, tracking progress and setting targets. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been maintained at the same high levels since the last inspection in 2003. Pupils continue to achieve well from their above average starting points in Year 1, a tribute to the good leadership and the management of the school. Pupils with speech and communication difficulties make at least good progress from their starting points and this enables some to move out of this category because they catch up well with others.

Governors have a good knowledge and understanding of the school. They are well informed, which enables them to successfully challenge the work of the school. Issues from the last inspection have been addressed comprehensively. The emphasis on investigative science is now a strength of the curriculum and opportunities for information and communication technology are now good. Capacity to improve is outstanding because the staff team and headteacher have demonstrated their very strong determination and ability to continuously drive forward improvements.

Personal development is outstanding because pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong, their behaviour is exemplary and attendance is good. The Christian ethos of the school promotes excellent spiritual, moral, and social development. The school ensures pupils care about others and take responsibility for their actions. The good quality teaching ensures that learning is enjoyable. This helps pupils to be hard working, collaborate well and take pride in their work. The curriculum is good and enhanced by visits, visitors and clubs such as Spanish Club. Although pupils have few opportunities to mix with children from different cultures, their cultural development is good. Whilst the school does not yet find enough first hand opportunities to extend pupils' multi-cultural experiences, they bear this need in mind as they make plans to enhance the curriculum. The curriculum encourages curiosity and provides good opportunities to promote speaking and listening skills. Pupils enjoy exploring the magnetism table and explaining, for example, how to make an electric circuit. School councillors take their responsibilities seriously and pupils are keen to be helpful. They are knowledgeable about healthy lifestyles and when possible, walk to school, an activity that encourages them to take a lively interest in the environment. Pupils enjoy dance and drama opportunities through clubs and they perform in school events. They play a full part in local festivals and celebrations and are regularly involved in fund raising for charities and their own school.

Following analysis of national test data last year, the differences in average points scores between boys and girls have been a concern of the school. These are being addressed well by a good range of strategies. Standards for boys in reading and writing were lower than for girls although similar to national gender differences. Standards for girls were lower in mathematics than for boys but similar to national differences. In order to address boys' standards there is an emphasis on mixed paired discussion in lessons and the reading scheme now includes more

non-fiction books. There is an innovative programme of raising the profile of fathers in activities such as story time and talking with pupils. Revised writing topics are now appealing more to boys. In order to address girls' scores in numeracy, there has been a planned emphasis on different ways of finding an answer, on more paired discussion and investigative work. Teachers' questioning explores this well but occasionally they miss chances to extend the discussion of methods. The senior team relies on their analysis of end of year test results to see if improvement has occurred. This is effective, but not frequent enough and they do not yet have reliable systems for continuous monitoring.

Changes to assessment procedures, and using the information gained, are relatively recent but are of a high standard. Pupils are involved in every lesson in judging their own progress. They have clear targets for learning and they can explain why teachers mark in the way they do. 'The wiggly box shows me what I got wrong (capital letters and full stops) and what I have to put right.' On a few occasions, opportunities for recording individuals' contributions are missed.

The head and deputy recognise subject leaders' roles are underdeveloped in the area of monitoring the teaching and learning in their subjects. They have identified that an extended management team to include the Foundation Stage and Administrative Officer will enhance the management of the school. Their self-evaluation is accurate and the actions they have put in place, for example, to attempt to negate gender differences, are wide ranging and effective. Governors are fully aware and supportive of the work of the school in many ways. They and parents as well as community volunteers give good practical support to the school such as painting the playground furniture and IT support.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

In the last two intakes, pupils have been making good progress from lower starting points than before, and are now entering Year 1 at broadly expected levels for their age in reading, writing and number. They have a well-planned curriculum, which ensures children have stimulating experiences that promote enquiry, build confidence and make learning fun. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well-planned and teachers concentrate effectively on encouraging speaking and listening skills through, for example, role play as mini-beasts when pupils ask questions such as 'Do you have wings?' or 'What do you feed on?' The department is well managed, progress carefully tracked and transition to Year 1 smoothly managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Seek ways to increase pupils' first hand experiences and understanding of a multicultural society.
- Plan ongoing monitoring of the impact of strategies.

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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?	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	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	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 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?	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?	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	1
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	2
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

29 May 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Cross Farm Infant School, Camberley, GU16 6LZ

I am writing to thank you for making me so welcome when I came to visit your school the other day. I enjoyed talking with you and looking at the beautiful work that you showed me. When I was in classes, I saw that your teachers work hard to make your lessons fun and to help you make good progress. They also help you with your targets to reach your learning goals. You reach high standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

I learned from you that you know how to be healthy people and to stay safe. Your behaviour is very good indeed and your attendance is good. I know you enjoy your responsibilities such as School Council and you have already made a difference to how you sit round in assemblies.

I have asked your teachers to think of more ways of helping you to find out about people from different cultures.

Your school has been trying to help boys to do even better in reading and writing and girls to do better in number work. I have asked the school to plan how to measure if the things they have done to help you, are successful.

I know most of you practise your reading, spelling and number work at home. I feel you could help yourselves and your teachers if every one of you did this important homework.

With very best wishes for your future

Yours sincerely

Lily Evans

Lead Inspector