

Ottershaw CofE Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125155
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315171
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Margaret Coussins

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	186
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	78
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Janette Dalglish
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Lillywhite
Date of previous school inspection	23 February 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Fletcher Close Ottershaw Chertsey KT16 0JT
Telephone number	01932 873652
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Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average infant school. Most pupils are of White, British origin. A few speak English as an additional language and five are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below that found nationally. Pupils' learning needs relate mainly to speech, language and communication difficulties. In September 2006 the school formed a federated governing body with Christ Church CE (now called Ottershaw CE) Junior school and since September 2007 the headteacher has led both schools. In September 2008, the deputy headteacher of the juniors became deputy headteacher of both schools. 28 children attend the Nursery on a part time basis. The school has Healthy School status and an Investors in People Award. There is a breakfast club and an after school club on the school premises managed by a private provider.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Pupils receive an excellent level of care. There is a good emphasis on developing the whole child as well as academic achievement so that pupils are well equipped for later life. Pupils enjoy their learning and their parents agree that their school is good. One parent wrote, 'My daughter is now a happy confident child who loves to come to school each day. We are delighted.'

Central to the school's success is the strong, very effective leadership provided by the headteacher and the deputy. They are committed to ensuring that everyone in the school can and will succeed both academically and in developing their personal skills. One parent wrote, 'The headteacher's enthusiasm for her school is infectious. All the staff seem to take such pride in their work.' The team have been very successful in creating a school where standards are well above average and pupils achieve well. Standards in the 2008 national tests were particularly high. Standards in writing, whilst above average and improving, remained the relatively weaker area in 2007 as more able pupils are not doing as well as they might. The school identified that pupils' lack of richness in written vocabulary and skills in sentence structure were aspects that were holding them back. Senior leaders quickly established successful strategies, which are gradually improving the quality of writing in these areas. These included rigorous tracking, more opportunities to talk about writing and more meaningful experiences to write about.

The quality of teaching and learning is carefully monitored so that it is consistently good. New staff are supported very effectively by those who are more experienced. On occasion, pupils are given insufficient opportunity to be responsible for their own learning or demonstrate their good levels of independence. This can encourage them to be unnecessarily dependent on adults. The school has just started to provide the International Primary Curriculum (IPC), which has already begun to enliven learning and make lessons more fun, purposeful and relevant to pupils' lives. One parent wrote, 'My children are inspired by the new IPC. They come home from school able to tell us all about their topic and what fun things they have done during the day.'

Much emphasis is put on pupils' personal development. As a result, behaviour is good and pupils work and play well together and feel free from bullying. Pupils have an excellent understanding of keeping safe and healthy. They are proud of their outstanding contribution to the school, local and wider communities. The headteacher and staff successfully include and integrate all communities and form productive partnerships with parents. One parent said, 'The head and deputy are both very approachable and are always open to discussing any issues, the same goes for class teachers.'

The school is facing changes through its federation with the junior school, which are fully acknowledged by the headteacher, deputy and governors. There is good capacity to improve further as demonstrated by the success in raising standards whilst ensuring that pupils' personal development is not overlooked.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children settle quickly into school and become happy and confident learners. They have good opportunities to visit the school and meet staff before they start, which helps them to feel secure. Children's welfare is a high priority and, as a result, their personal development and well-being is good. When children start school their skills and abilities are generally above

expectations for their age. Their language and communication skills are particularly strong. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and provide a balance of activities led by adults and those where they can make their own choices. The outdoor area is used effectively to promote children's physical skills and knowledge of the world around them. Sometimes opportunities are missed to extend children's learning in literacy and numeracy, for example, by asking questions to stimulate, challenge and extend their thinking and learning when they are engaged in role-play activities. As a consequence children's progress slows. Observation information is used satisfactorily to plan next steps in children's learning and to ensure that the least able and most vulnerable settle well and are effectively supported. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The analysis of data is not rigorous enough to give a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses in the areas of learning. Overall, children make steady progress in all areas of learning. Their achievement is satisfactory and by the end of the Reception year, most reach the learning goals expected for their age.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage in order to raise standards.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning and not be over dependent on adults.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Year 1 with standards that are a little above average. Progress accelerates in Years 1 and 2 because of rigorous tracking and high expectations. As a result pupils' achievement is good and they reach well above average standards by the time they leave. In reading and mathematics around half of all the pupils reach the higher level 3, which is a much higher figure than found nationally. Fewer reach the higher level in writing although still more than found nationally. Challenging more able writers remains a priority across the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because the school intervenes early so that any gaps in skills and knowledge are quickly identified and effective support put in place.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils enjoy school and appreciate the clubs and extra activities that are provided. As a result, a very large majority of pupils attend school regularly. A small number, however, have high levels of absences and this slows the progress they make. They feel safe at school and say that there is no bullying 'only the occasional falling out'. Relationships and behaviour are good. Pupils trust all the staff and say they feel confident to talk to them if they had any problems. They enjoy the responsibilities they are given as monitors and school councillors and take their roles very seriously. Pupils are especially proud of their work to improve the school environment, which has led to a Gold Litter Free School Award and a prize in the Runnymede in Bloom competition.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress because teaching is consistently good. The purpose of each lesson is shared with pupils so they know what they will be learning and what they are expected to be able to do by the end of the lesson. Some are beginning to learn how to assess themselves. Most lessons move at a brisk pace and include work that is well matched to pupils of different abilities. This enables all pupils to make good progress and more able pupils to reach higher levels of attainment. Teachers help pupils understand how they can learn best by using different strategies and approaches. On occasion however, not enough responsibility is given to pupils to instigate and initiate their own learning. Although many pupils are confident and independent, they are not always encouraged to show this when staff do things that pupils are quite capable of doing for themselves.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The recent introduction of the IPC is an innovative development that is beginning to serve pupils well. It provides exciting and active learning opportunities and makes a positive contribution to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a recent initiative and, as it is not yet fully embedded throughout the school, its impact on pupils' standards and achievement cannot be assessed. The curriculum is enriched very effectively with a good range of extra activities, clubs and themed weeks. Opportunities for role-play for example, when all classes went 'on holiday' to France or India and visits to places of interest, such as the Royal Horticultural Society gardens at Wisley, link well to pupils' learning, extend their experiences and add to their enjoyment. Learning through first hand experiences and planning take into account the different ways in which children learn. Pupils enjoy learning French as demonstrated by their enthusiastic greeting and singing in assembly.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes excellent care of its pupils. The arrangements for safeguarding all pupils are well established and effective. Regular risk assessments and health and safety checks are carried out to ensure that the school is a safe and welcoming environment despite the poor state of repair of some of the buildings. Teachers do a great job in enhancing the inadequate buildings and ensuring that they do not have a detrimental impact on pupils' learning. Academic guidance is good. Tracking and assessment information is used well to identify the next steps in pupils' learning. Some pupils know their targets for learning and what they are expected to learn in each lesson through the star system. One pupil said, 'I know how to get better in maths, I have got to be a two star learner not one star.' Marking and feedback during lessons is often good and gives pupils clear direction to improve their work but this is not consistent throughout the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and deputy are the driving force behind recent school improvement. Their strong, very effective teamwork has secured the significant improvements in standards seen in 2008, particularly for more able pupils reaching higher levels. There is a shared commitment to maintain the high standards and good provision by working well together and keeping the needs of all pupils at the forefront of the school's work. As a result, pupils achieve well and make good gains in their personal development. Most aspects of the school's work are evaluated effectively. The school has formed good working partnerships with local schools and external organisations, which contribute effectively to pupils' well-being. Phase leaders and subject leaders have a good knowledge of the areas they are responsible for and have plans for further improvement. Many are new to their posts and although it is too early to accurately assess their impact on standards and achievement, a good start has been made. Governors are very supportive of the school and staff but their monitoring and evaluation of the school's work is not yet rigorous enough to hold the school to account for its performance.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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 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

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

10 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Ottershaw CofE Infant School, Chertsey, KT16 0JT

I am writing to let you know how much my colleague and I enjoyed our visit to your school and what we found out. Thank you for making us so welcome, for talking to us about your work and telling us what you think about your school.

We found out that yours is a good school and here are the reasons why.

- You enjoy being at the school and get on well with each other and all of the staff.
- Your behaviour is good and this helps you learn well in your lessons.
- You work hard and achieve well. Your writing is getting much better. Well done for this.
- You are very good at eating healthy food and doing lots of activities to keep you fit.
- The things you do to look after the school and the environment are excellent.
- Teachers make your lessons and all the other activities fun and interesting.
- Everyone in the school looks after you really well and helps you to succeed.
- Your headteacher and deputy do a really good job in running the school.

There are two things that we think could be better.

- Make sure that all the activities for the children in the Nursery and Reception classes help them learn as well as they can.
- As you are such good learners, the staff should give you more opportunities to do things by yourself so you can show them what you know and can do on your own.

I really enjoyed all your interesting writing and lovely pictures about your 'holiday'.

Thank you again for all your help and for being so interesting, polite and friendly to talk to.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins

Lead Inspector