

Wallace Fields Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125298
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315226
Inspection dates	14–15 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Ian Wilson

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	273
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr A Norman
Headteacher	Mr R Mapleson
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2004
School address	Dorling Drive Ewell Epsom KT17 3BH
Telephone number	0208 393 0350
Fax number	0208 786 7498

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Wallace Fields Junior School is a larger than average size school which serves an area of mainly owner-occupied housing. The percentages of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and speaking English as an additional language are below average. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and those entitled to free school meals are well below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Wallace Junior School is an outstanding school. It has rightly gained a number of awards for the quality and range of its work and parents are overwhelmingly pleased with the quality of education it provides for their children. Typical of the many comments received is, 'I simply cannot fault the school. The standard of teaching is excellent with pupils' work being of a high calibre. The children are well behaved, polite and have respect for one another'.

The school is led very well by the headteacher and he is well supported by a very capable leadership team. They evaluate the work of the school thoroughly, set challenging targets to aim for and plan carefully and systematically to achieve them. As a result, the school has improved considerably since the last inspection, as seen for example in the rapid rise in standards. Pupils make excellent progress and attain exceptionally high standards by the end of Year 6. Given its track record and excellent leadership, capacity to continue to improve is outstanding.

Teachers are enthusiastic, have very good relationships with their pupils and plan their lessons very carefully. They mark pupils' work thoroughly and provide helpful guidance on how to improve and targets to aim for. They use information and communication technology (ICT) very well to support and engage pupils in their learning, for example through the use of inter-active whiteboards.

The curriculum is very well organised so that work is interesting, varied and well matched to pupils individual learning needs. Although pupils use computers and have good ICT skills, their opportunities are restricted because the current computer network in the school is not powerful enough to enable all pupils in a class to use a computer at the same time. Each pupil's progress is systematically monitored and support for pupils falling behind or with learning difficulties is very well planned. The combination of strong teaching and the excellent curriculum coupled with very good individual support enables pupils to flourish. They make excellent progress and attain exceptionally high standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. They enjoy learning and develop very good personal skills such as confidence, self-esteem and the ability to work well with others.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide better opportunities for pupils to make use of ICT in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The achievement of pupils is outstanding. Pupils of all abilities make excellent progress throughout the school and the overall standards that they attain at the end of Year 6 are exceptionally high. Their progress in reading, writing and mathematics is equally good because of the very good and systematic teaching of the necessary skills in each area. For example, in English, they are very well taught how to write for different purposes and in mathematics there is a focus on ensuring pupils know their tables well and can solve mathematical problems. Both in reading and in mathematics, regular and well-planned additional support is provided for those pupils falling behind or having difficulty. The effectiveness of these strategies is shown in the steady rise in standards over the past five years. The school's challenging targets for 2007 were exceeded and equally challenging targets have been set for the current academic year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. This can be seen, for example, in the respect pupils have for each other, the very good relationships throughout the school and the way in which they discuss other peoples' cultures and religions with sensitivity. Pupils are polite, articulate and have good levels of self-esteem and self-confidence. They behave exceptionally well and their attendance rate is well above average. Their great enjoyment of school is very evident in the enthusiastic way in which they participate in lessons and other activities such as assemblies. Pupils have excellent knowledge of what they need to do to live a healthy lifestyle including eating well and taking exercise. They know how to stay very safe through visits from appropriate professional personnel such as police, road safety officers and through work in lessons on topics such as drugs education. They make a strong contribution to the community, through working as helpers, being members of the school council, taking part in ecological activities and being involved in a wide range of charitable events. Their strong personal and social skills, coupled with very high standards in key basic skills ensure that they are very well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding because the overall high quality of the teaching enables pupils to achieve so well. Teachers are enthusiastic and have good relationships with their pupils. They have good subject knowledge and explain things clearly. Lessons are planned thoroughly, with tasks that are well matched to pupils' learning needs and they have good pace. Teachers use a good range of teaching strategies including whole-class teaching, individual, paired and group work. Frequent questioning is used to check understanding. Sometimes the teacher moves on too quickly once the first correct answer is received and does not check that all pupils understand. Support staff are used well to provide additional help to those pupils needing it. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and quality of work they can produce are high. Pupils are given good, clear guidance on how they are doing and how to improve their work through a combination of thorough, consistent and clear marking and the setting of targets for each pupil in English and mathematics. Pupils, themselves, say that they are challenged in lessons but that they enjoy the work because it is interesting and 'at their level' and they know what they need to do to improve. As a result they are keen to learn and do very well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The organisation of the curriculum, including the arrangements for teaching pupils in groups of similar levels of attainment, supports the high standards which pupils achieve. The school gives pupils a rich and balanced experience which results in them being interested and involved in their learning. It provides very well for their personal development through the teaching of personal, social and health education and the many activities that pupils have to cooperate with each other. Provision for pupils who need additional support and higher achievers is very carefully planned to ensure that they make the best possible progress. Standards have been raised by the judicious use of teaching time within the curriculum, for example, learning in

science benefits from sufficient time to prepare, carry out and discuss their investigations within one session. Curriculum theme weeks, such as book, mathematics and geography weeks add variety and breadth to the curriculum. Some limitations in computer hardware are, however, reducing the opportunities pupils have for making use of ICT in their learning. The curriculum is supplemented very well by residential and local visits, visitors and other special learning events such as Arts Days, Science Night and Environmental Week and by a wide range of visitors who work with the pupils on aspects such as art, music and writing or drama. The many extra-curricular clubs, which include sports and the arts, are well attended and enjoyed.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Teachers and support staff know pupils and their needs well and there is a high level of commitment amongst staff to caring for pupils and enabling them to achieve well. One parent commented, 'The school develops well rounded and well balanced pupils who work to the best of their ability because everyone is valued.' This excellent pastoral and academic support has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. For example, the arrangements to keep track of pupils' academic progress as they move through the school, are exceptionally thorough and the information is used very well to plan support and intervention for pupils not making expected progress. Safeguarding procedures in the school, such as first aid and arrangements for ensuring child protection, are robust. Pupils say that they feel safe and have an adult that they can talk to if they have concerns. The school works very well with parents keeping them well informed about their children's progress. Very good use is made of outside agencies to provide specialist support for pupils where needed. Pupils are well prepared to join the school in Year 3 and for moving on to secondary school at the end of Year 6.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The high achievement within the school reflects the excellent leadership of the headteacher who is well supported by a capable team. The leadership team work closely together so that the school has a sense of purpose and inclusion in providing the best possible education for all pupils. 'I am very pleased with the way the school is run' and 'the leadership of the school is excellent', reflected the comments of many parents.

The school evaluates its strengths and weaknesses very well and it uses the information effectively by setting challenging targets and planning systematically for improvement. Arrangements to monitor pupils' progress and provide support for them where needed are excellent. Arrangements to monitor the quality of teaching and the curriculum are also very thorough thereby helping to maintain the high quality of provision. Subject leaders lead their areas of responsibility well through their support for staff and involvement in monitoring. They need, however, to increase their involvement in the detailed planning for improvement so that they can take greater responsibility for the standards achieved in their subject.

Governors know their school well and are very involved in the life of the school. They fulfil their statutory duties well. Finances are carefully monitored and managed in order to help the school provide the best possible curriculum. There are very good links with outside agencies and parents and these make a valuable contribution to the work of the school.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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 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	1
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	1

The quality of provision

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

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

29 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wallace Fields Junior School, Epsom, KT17 3BH

You may remember that three inspectors recently came to visit your school. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. You were all very polite, confident and told us what you thought very clearly. We really enjoyed meeting you, your teachers and other people who work in the school. We are writing to let you know what we found out.

We think that you go to an excellent school, which is led very well by your headteacher. Both he and all staff are very committed to helping you achieve well. We think that you have excellent teachers and that the school organises lessons and all the other learning activities very effectively so that they are interesting and meet your needs very well. The school frequently checks on your progress and provides very good additional help when you need it. As a result, you all make excellent progress throughout school. Both you and your parents said how much you enjoyed school and get along with each other. You feel safe, cared for and work hard. We were particularly impressed with the way your school helps you to develop good personal skills, such as self-confidence, being responsible and knowing how to stay safe and healthy. A good example of this was the impressive assembly which we saw. This was led by many of you and you all behaved so well.

We have made just one suggestion for improvement and that is for the school to improve the computers in the ICT (Information and Communications Technology) room so that you can all use a computer at the same time.

Thank you again for being so friendly. We enjoyed meeting you. I send you my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Ian Wilson

Lead Inspector