

Rake CofE First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125989
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	315383
Inspection date	14 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Linda Kelsey HMI

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	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	49
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	8
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Brown
Headteacher	John Arnold
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	London Road Rake Liss GU33 7JH
Telephone number	01730 892126
Fax number	01730 894860

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small first school attracts pupils from a wide area. The mobility of pupils in and out of the school is high, and year groups vary from as low as five to as high as 11 pupils. There are eight Reception children in the school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average, but very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A very small proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. From September 2009, the school will change from a first school to a primary school as Year 5 pupils stay on into Year 6. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is below average.

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. The headteacher has done much over the years to improve the provision at the school, to extend and re-organise classrooms and to campaign to keep the school open. It is a popular school and most parents are positive about what it offers their children. As one parent said, 'My child is so happy here at this school.' Overall standards are broadly average. For some pupils, standards are high in writing. Pupils make good progress during their time in Reception and Year 1. Their rate of progress is satisfactory overall as pupils move through the rest of the school into the older classes. This is because teaching, while good in the EYFS and Year 1, is satisfactory through the rest of the school. Teachers are not making the best use of the good quality information they have about pupils' progress to fully challenge them in lessons. As a result, not enough of the more able pupils in the school achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science. The curriculum provided for the pupils is good and covers a wide range of subjects that interest and motivate the pupils, such as the history lesson about King Arthur, where some good quality subject material had been prepared by the teacher. Pupils enjoy school and all it has to offer in additional activities, sport and visits. Their personal development is good because pupils are well cared for and supported in their learning. All safeguarding and child protection procedures are in place. Pupils know each other well and there is a strong family atmosphere around the school. As one pupil said, 'I like the smallness of the school and that I know everyone and have more friends.' There are strong links with the local community and church, and the school takes every opportunity to get itself involved in local community events. The school's leaders have addressed the key issues from the last inspection well, and as a result, marking has improved and pupils' achievement in writing is now good. The school knows what it needs to do to bring about higher standards, although selfassessment is sometimes overgenerous. Governors support the school well, but are not yet doing enough to challenge its performance.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children perform well in the Reception Year. Their work is well planned and delivered with good expertise. They access all areas of the curriculum through well-focused topics and themes which extend their personal development and improve their early literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, the youngest pupils enjoy their time at school and, by the end of the year, children have made good progress from their starting points and are ready for the next stage of learning. Good arrangements are in place to ensure children are safe and well cared for, and the imminent development of the outside area should bring greater flexibility and safety for children to play and learn outside. There are good links with parents, who have an integral part in their children's education and are fully involved in settling them from the start of their time at the school. Leadership of the EYFS is strong, with a clear understanding of the needs of the youngest pupils in the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve all teaching and learning to the level of the best seen in the school.
- Use the assessment information to plan more suitably challenging work, particularly for the more able pupils.

- Ensure the leaders of the school, including governors, use self-evaluation to examine more accurately what the school has achieved and take responsibility for improving standards and progress further.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 5 are broadly average. Pupils make adequate progress from Year 2 to Year 5, although pupils in Reception and Year 1 make good progress. Assessment information, including national test results at the end of Key Stage 1, indicates that over the last few years pupils have always made good progress in reading through the school. Pupils enter the school with at least average abilities. Because of the recent increased focus on writing, there is now good progress in this area. The portfolios of writing work and other assessment data have helped inform the school how well pupils are doing over time. This information also shows that while achievement overall is satisfactory, not enough pupils make sufficiently good progress in mathematics and science. In these subjects, the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels at the end of Year 2 is below the national average, and below those seen in reading and writing. At the end of Year 3, because of the two-year cycle of topics covered in science, pupils have gained more knowledge.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their time at the school and attendance is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and know how to behave well. Pupils are given time for daily reflection in assemblies. They are developing a greater understanding of the life of different people around the world and celebrate the local culture and history. Most pupils have a positive attitude to the school and consider that they are listened to and their concerns acted upon. They enjoy being part of the school council and feel their suggestions are taken seriously. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay fit and healthy as they take part in daily exercise routines before school starts and eat plenty of fruit during their time at school. They swim in their own school pool and take part in games and sport regularly through their links with other schools and the community. Pupils say they feel safe at school. At the school, pupils have an opportunity to look after animals and grow their own plants so that they develop a good understanding of the world around them. These developments in personal qualities and their average standards in core skills mean that they are adequately prepared for their future schools and later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall, although it is better in the Reception and Year 1 class. Teachers have good subject knowledge and generally prepare the lessons well. An example of this was seen in a lesson on 2D and 3D shapes, which enabled the youngest pupils to role play their investigation as 'builders' into 2D shapes outside while the older and more able pupils took a

more in-depth study of the properties of 3D shapes. Pupils were engaged and enthusiastic about what they were doing. Resources are well organised and ready for pupils to use, and good relationships have been developed between adults and pupils. Teaching assistants are well deployed in all classes and know how to work with groups of pupils to support their learning effectively. Marking of pupils' work is done consistently well. In some lessons, work is not always sufficiently challenging for pupils, particularly for the more able.. Some teaching methods, such as the over-use of worksheets and textbooks, inhibit independent learning and investigation so that learners become too passive.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and balanced, and encourages pupils to be enthusiastic about school life. Pupils learn French and go on a wide range of visits and a residential trip to the Isle of Wight. There is good provision for literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum, although there is insufficient challenge within the work for mathematics and science to ensure good progress and achievement. Pupils are offered a range of after-school clubs, including dance and music, sport activities and games to play at break and lunch time. The grounds are attractive and have an outdoor swimming pool, wildlife areas and adventure trail. Pupils in the EYFS have access to the outside to do some of their work and investigations. There are good opportunities for pupils to be involved with the local community, and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well because of the small class sizes and good work of the teaching assistants.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Good quality care and support encourages pupils to enjoy school, attend well and feel safe while there. Arrangements for safeguarding are secure, and are reviewed and updated regularly. The school works well with parents and other agencies to ensure all pupils are strongly supported, and parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and well-being. Assessment arrangements are in place and help to track pupils' progress over time but these do not fully inform teachers about how they can plan more challenging tasks for the pupils in class, particularly the more able.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is led effectively by the headteacher, who is supported by the whole staff, the parents and the governors. There has been improvement in the school's performance since 2007 and test results indicate that pupils made good progress in writing because of the good focus put on this subject. The headteacher knows there is more to do in raising the standards of the more able pupils and in mathematics and science across the school. Teaching is monitored regularly, but good practice is not shared amongst all the staff. Teachers use the resources well. The good teamwork of staff, including teaching assistants, and the support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensure that pupils' personal development is effective. Good links have been made with neighbouring and other outside agencies to widen the curriculum and give staff more opportunities to engage in training. The school shares a common

sense of purpose which is very much appreciated by the parents and this contributes to a satisfactory capacity to further raise standards.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

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/or disabilities make progress	3

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	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 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

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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**

16 October 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of Rake C of E First School, Liss GU33 7JH Thank you for making us so welcome. I enjoyed talking to you about your school and work. Many of you told me how happy you are. Most of your parents are very appreciative about what the school does to make you happy and work hard. You work hard in your lessons and most of you have done better in your recent tests. You are a credit to your parents and teachers and you should be proud that so many of you listen carefully to your teachers and behave so well around the school. I can see that you enjoy being in your playground and garden because your teachers have worked hard to make it inviting and fun with the adventure trail, swimming pool and a range of play equipment. Overall, your school is satisfactory. That means it does some things well, but I have also asked the school to do a few things to make it an even better place in which to learn. Some of you could easily do some harder work in lessons, so I have asked your teachers to make sure that when they give you work, some of it is more difficult to do. I know you can manage this as some of you said you found the work too easy at times. I have also asked the school to make sure all of you get good teaching at all times and that the headteacher and members of staff keep a check that this is happening. You are very good at giving suggestions to the school through your school council and are pleased that the adults take note of what you say. You should continue to tell the teachers what you feel and I am sure that the headteacher will take action if possible. This will also help the school to have a good and realistic understanding of how well you are all doing. Good luck with the rest of your time at the school. I know you are pleased to be able to spend another year there before you start secondary school and I can easily see the reasons why. I wish you all the best of luck for your future happiness. Linda Kelsey HMI