

Queen's Crescent Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126294
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	315480
Inspection dates	5–6 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Caroline McKee

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	348
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Derek Underhill
Headteacher	Gill Clark
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2004
School address	Windsor Close Chippenham SN14 0QT
Telephone number	01249 460190
Fax number	01249 460190

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Queen's Crescent Primary is a larger than average primary school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average and nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The school holds a number of accreditations including the Activemark, Gold Artsmark award and Healthy Schools status.

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 and parents are overwhelmingly happy with the quality of care and education provided for their children. The pupils' personal development is outstanding. This is a direct result of the outstanding personal care, guidance and support provided by the school. The good quality teaching and a good curriculum enables pupils to attain above average standards. They achieve well particularly in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave school in Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also achieve well because they receive very good additional support. The headteacher has built an effective team involving all staff and governors. Key areas for improvement in the school development plan are already making a positive difference to the quality of teaching and the pupils' progress. A particular example of this is in the teaching of writing and mathematics where there is rapid progress. Achievement, which had been satisfactory for the past three years, is now good. Governors are very proactive and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are well informed by the senior leadership team and keep a close eye on improvements by monitoring and evaluating the impact of actions. Individual pupils' progress is tracked rigorously, though the leadership team is less secure in its knowledge of the overall progress made by pupils in groups, classes and whole school. Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage in all areas of learning. Much effort at the start of the year goes into ensuring that children feel confident within their new environment and this is very evident in both whole-class and practical activities. In Key Stage 1, pupils build effectively on the skills they have and make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards reached in each of these subjects by the end of Year 2 are above average. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The selected schemes for improving the pupils' skills are having a rapid impact on the pupils' progress. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have risen considerably since the previous inspection due to increased resources, improved teaching skills and good leadership. Overall, progress is good and improving because assessment information is used increasingly well, enabling the teachers to track and meet the specific needs of the pupils. Progress is slower in some lessons because the pupils are not given enough time to develop their own learning and questioning does not sufficiently challenge their thinking. The pupils have an excellent knowledge and understanding of how to eat healthily and why regular exercise is necessary. Regular health and safety checks and tight procedures ensure the safety of the pupils. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour in and around the school are outstanding. They say that they enjoy school a great deal and are very appreciative of the many additional activities. Attendance is above the national average. The school council plays an active role in the school's decisionmaking process. It has made effective contributions at whole-school discussions, for example implementing a healthier menu for the canteen. Pupils are effectively involved in the life of the local and wider community and regularly help to raise funds for charities. They are particularly knowledgeable about ecological issues. The 'Eco Warriors' take their role very seriously and are passionate about creating a school that is more sustainable. The school is at the forefront of working with parents and local agencies to ensure that the pupils receive the very best care available. They are proactive in creating new links and making sure that pupils move to their secondary schools as smoothly as possible. The curriculum is well organised and enriched with the provision of French. Additional activities such as residential visits, clubs such as ICT and sports also ensure that the pupils receive a rich diet of opportunities. There is a strong emphasis on the personal, social and health education as well as the cultural development

of the pupils, which make very effective contributions to their outstanding personal development. Overall, the school is making good progress. It is in a good position to improve further and to continue to attain and improve upon the above average standards achieved.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The children start school with standards that are broadly average. The vast majority of the children reach the expected learning goals by the end of the year and a significant minority exceed these goals. Excellent relationships and care from the staff and the quality of information received before they arrive in the Foundation Stage ensure that the children settle quickly. The children feel safe, confident and happy at school. They play and behave together very well. The parents are very appreciative with many saying that they could not hope for a better start for their children. Teachers plan their lessons effectively, capture children's interest and usually assess their needs accurately. In group activities, the children are well supported by adults to guide their learning. However, during structured play, children are sometimes left for too long without comments that would help to spark and develop their ideas. All areas of learning are covered with particularly good opportunities to develop their language and literacy skills. Nevertheless, there are sometimes lost opportunities to allow pupils to make decisions and to develop independence. Leadership and management are good, ensuring that staff work together effectively. This, combined with good teaching, results in the children making good progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all lessons provide pupils with enough opportunities to learn for themselves and that questioning probes and challenges their knowledge.
- Ensure that the system for the tracking of pupils' progress gives detailed information to check that different groups, classes and whole-year groups are doing well enough.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards reached by the end of Year 6 are above average. Pupils' achievement has accelerated in the current year and is now good. Pupils make good progress through the Foundation Stage. Standards reached by the end of Year 2 are above average with pupils making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils continue this good progress in Key Stage 2 and have made significant gains, particularly in mathematics and writing, as a result of well chosen teaching methods that challenge the pupils more effectively. Standards in science and ICT are also above average. The pupils use their ICT, literacy and numeracy skills confidently in many well-designed tasks in all subjects. This reflects better resources, teacher knowledge and a well planned curriculum. Higher attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress with additional support and guidance.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Throughout the school, the pupils' personal development, well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. They are exceptionally well behaved, really enjoy coming to school and have a sense of fun that is evident in lessons and in the playground. They say lessons are enjoyable because teachers make them interesting and they enjoy the

praise and rewards that they receive. They have a very strong sense of right and wrong and are quick to ensure that the 'right thing is done' in the very rare occasions of bullying. They eat a healthy diet and enjoy taking part in the many sporting activities on offer contributing to the school gaining the Activemark. The pupils are very safety conscious and know how to sensibly deal with possible risks. They all have a particularly good understanding of ecological issues and the infectious enthusiasm and good work of the school council and 'Eco Warriors' make a positive difference to the school's daily routine and surroundings. They talk enthusiastically about their successes in raising funds for local charities and the wider community. They use their basic skills well in many different projects, helping them to prepare for their future walks through life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have clear expectations of what the pupils should learn and their clear explanations ensure that they are well prepared and confident to tackle their given tasks. The planning is generally good, reflecting the accurate assessments and knowledge of the pupils' next steps in learning. Teaching assistants are well briefed and supply good support, particularly for pupils with learning difficulties/and or disabilities. The pace of learning slows if the teachers spend too much time talking and do not give the pupils enough time to work independently or to explore their own ways of solving problems. Some use of questioning does not always challenge the pupils to think more deeply. The teachers capture the pupils' interest and this is evident in their enthusiasm for learning and in their exemplary behaviour. The good communication that exists between all teachers ensures that there is good consistency in learning for all classes and good use of well-designed resources in all classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a rich range of learning experiences, which mean that they love coming to school. In Years 1 to 6, a strong and effective emphasis is given to the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy, ICT and scientific skills, which they use effectively to enhance their learning. This emphasis is reflected well in the dynamic and informative displays in all areas of the school. More emphasis on their mathematical problem-solving skills has led to a faster rate of progress and standards rising. However, teachers do not always give the pupils enough time to develop their own learning skills. The curriculum contributes well to the pupils' personal development, particularly through the wide range of visits, trips and clubs. This fosters greater interest and depth of knowledge as well as social and cultural skills. Their enthusiasm for their visit to Montecute House enlivened their learning of the Tudors the following day. Provision for the arts is a key strength and is reflected in the Artsmark Gold award.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides a caring and supportive family atmosphere where pupils feel very safe and secure. This enables them to enjoy their activities and make good progress academically and excellent progress in their personal development. The school meets all statutory requirements

in relation to child protection and risk assessment. Individual academic targets are regularly set and reviewed with parents, teachers and pupils. The pupils enjoy being involved in this process and have a good understanding of what it is they need to do to improve. Marking of the pupils' work is helpful but on occasions it does not tell the pupils, what it is they did to achieve well or detailed information of what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the school are good. The senior leadership team has ensured that all levels of management and all governors are effectively involved in the school's self-evaluation process. A very good team spirit exists which results in the outstanding care for the all-round development of each pupil. The school improvement plan clearly identifies necessary actions, particularly for the raising of standards in mathematics and writing. These plans, along with higher expectations in the pupils' rate of progress, have led to improved achievement this year. The school's finances and resources are well managed and all staff have very good opportunities for professional development. This has contributed to the recent improvements in achievement. Regular observations of lessons are helping to improve aspects of teaching and all teachers are held accountable for their responsibilities. The newly established academic tracking system is already ensuring that pupils are tracked well, individually, and has helped teachers to raise standards. A good deal of pertinent information is collected and is used well, but is not yet focused on different groups of pupils, classes or whole-year groups so that leaders have a good overall picture of achievement. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and provides good support through regular meetings as well as holding the school suitably 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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 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	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?	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 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

- 9 June 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of Queen's Crescent Primary School, Chippenham, SN14 0QT Thank you very much for welcoming the inspection team to your school. It was a delight to see so many happy faces during lessons and at playtimes. We think that the way you support and help each other and your attitudes to learning are excellent. These things contribute much to making the school good. You make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from the time you enter the Foundation Stage to the time you leave in Year 6, reaching standards that are above average. You also show that you very much enjoy the good teaching and the good range of activities the teachers prepare for you. You have worked hard to improve your writing and mathematics and the teachers have also worked hard to help you to make better progress. You use ICT very well in all your subjects and you told us how this has improved recently. All staff and governors help to ensure the school provides excellent care, support and guidance so that you improve your work and make excellent progress in your personal development. The headteacher is doing a good job to improve the school for you and she is well supported by the rest of the staff and governors. The school is also doing some very good work so that the teachers know how well you are doing individually and then use that information to set your next targets with you. So that the school can continue to improve, we have asked staff to:
 - Give you more opportunities to work for longer on your own and in small groups, and to ask you questions that really make you all think.
 - Gather more information about how well you are doing as a whole class or year group to check that you are doing well enough. We wish you every best wish and hope that you can become even better learners. Yours sincerely Caroline Mckee Lead Inspector

Annex B



9 June 2008

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Yours sincerely

Caroline Mckee
Lead Inspector