

Castlewood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131130
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	315729
Inspection date	8 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rosemary Burton
Headteacher	Julia Slocombe
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2004
School address	Castlewood Road Southwater Horsham RH13 9US
Telephone number	01403 734822
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following:

- provision and progress in the Foundation Stage
- progress in mathematics
- how well members of staff monitor pupils' progress
- the impact of the curriculum on pupils' enjoyment of school
- how well pupils maintain healthy lifestyles.

Evidence was gathered from discussions with pupils, members of staff and governors, observations of teaching and learning, views of parents, and scrutiny of pupils' work and school documentation. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Pupils come to this average sized primary school from the village of Southwater. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. The school has a below average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well at this good school. Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that pupils' personal development is excellent and that they become well-rounded and mature individuals.

On entry to the school, most children are working within the levels expected for this age group. Children in the Reception class make a good start to their education, although they learn best when working with an adult. Good teaching between Years 1 and 6 enables pupils to make good progress, and by the end of Year 6, standards are above average. Pupils learn especially quickly in English because teachers use their good subject knowledge and interesting resources to engage the pupils' interest fully. In mathematics, pupils do not all learn as quickly as they could during mental mathematics sessions. This is because at these times, teachers do not always plan work that matches the pupils' differing abilities. Members of staff support speaking and listening well, enabling pupils to become confident and articulate. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and these contribute well towards the good behaviour in the school. Pupils are fully involved in assessing their own learning and know what they need to do next to improve their work.

Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties. Specific pupil-friendly targets and good use of commercial intervention programmes enable these pupils to make the same good progress as their peers.

Well above average attendance demonstrates that the pupils enjoy school very much, and they say that they especially appreciate the varied and interesting curriculum. The good curriculum includes very good links between different subjects, putting learning into context and making the pupils very keen to participate. As two pupils said, 'We learn something new every day,' and 'I like the way we are educated and the teachers make lessons fun and exciting.' There are good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and their information and communication technology skills across the curriculum. The school is working well to expand the opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy to support learning in other subjects. Good use is made of interesting displays of work, visits and visitors to expand the pupils' knowledge. For example, pupils went on an archaeological dig and learnt some Latin when studying the Romans. The curriculum supports pupils' personal development especially well, and helps them to lead exceptionally healthy lifestyles. For example, pupils take frequent exercise and have a clear understanding of the importance of eating fresh fruit and vegetables.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils show good respect towards others and are polite, friendly and helpful. They show their spiritual awareness and enquiring minds by asking each other questions such as, 'Where did people come from?' and 'Is the earth going to die?' They take responsibility very seriously and help each other by becoming play and sports leaders. Most pupils feel safe from bullying and are satisfied with the way 'unkindness' is dealt with by the teachers. They reflect sensibly on their own attitudes and behaviour and some have noticed that behaviour is best 'when we are not tired'. Pupils contribute to the community very well. They support charities and have helped to make a map for the local country park. The school works well to increase pupils' knowledge of multicultural Britain and to forge links with schools in other countries.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and members of staff ensure that procedures for safeguarding pupils are fully in place. The school works closely with external

agencies such as parents, other schools and health services to support the well-being of all of its pupils.

Good leadership and management are ensuring that leaders have a clear vision for the school and that provision is improving rapidly. The headteacher, senior management team and governors work together well as a team. They are enthusiastic and strongly committed to improving pupils' progress further. The maintenance of good achievement and improved attendance figures from the time of the last inspection demonstrate that the school has a good capacity to go on improving. Good systems for self-evaluation enable leaders to know the school's strengths and areas for development. The headteacher is aware that criteria for measuring success could be more specific. The school sets and achieves challenging targets. Pupils' progress is monitored rigorously so that weaknesses in provision can be identified and put right swiftly.

Above average standards and outstanding personal development prepare the pupils well for the next stage of their education and later life. Most parents are pleased with the work of the school. Two parents summed up the positive views of many others by writing, 'It is a privilege to have such a friendly and caring local primary school,' and 'The school works extremely hard to motivate our children and engage them in active learning.' These comments demonstrate some of the school's key strengths.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good teaching enables children in the Reception class to make good progress, and standards are slightly above average when they start in Year 1. Children do especially well in personal development because members of staff teach these skills particularly well and help them to settle into school life quickly. As a result, children are happy at school and behave well. They listen carefully when working with adults, and learn to share resources sensibly. Children do not always make good progress when they are working on tasks they have chosen for themselves. This is because members of staff do not always interact with them at these times or give them enough guidance on how they can extend their learning. Members of staff keep careful records of the children's progress and leadership and management are good because senior members of staff have clear plans to improve provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that children in the Foundation Stage make good progress when working on tasks they have chosen for themselves.
- Make sure that teachers provide appropriate challenge for all pupils in mental mathematics.

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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?	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	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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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 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 July 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Castlewood Primary School, Horsham RH13 9US

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and for sharing your work with me. I am pleased that you thoroughly enjoy coming to this good school.

Here are some other points about your school:

- You make good progress, and do especially well in English.
- You behave sensibly and take responsibility very well.
- Your awareness of how to live a healthy life is outstanding.
- Teaching is good and your teachers help you to enjoy school by making lessons fun.
- You study a good range of interesting topics and I enjoyed looking at the displays of your work.
- All adults in school are kind and caring and look after you very well.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors know how to make the school even better.
- Your parents and carers are pleased that you come to this school.

What I have asked your school to do now:

- Help those of you in the Reception Year to learn quickly when you are working on activities you have chosen for yourselves.
- Make sure that teachers provide you all with work that is neither too hard nor too easy in mental mathematics.

You can do your bit to help your teachers by continuing to work hard. I thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your school and wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alison Cartlidge Lead Inspector

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