

Pyrford Church of England Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131906
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315886
Inspection dates	16–17 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Olson Davis

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	411
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr C. Roy Davey
Headteacher	Mrs Irene Smith
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2003
School address	Coldharbour Road Pyrford Woking GU22 8SP
Telephone number	01932 342693
Fax number	001932 355839

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than most other primary schools. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The largest minority ethnic groups are of Pakistani heritage and any other White background. The proportion of pupils for whom English is not their home language are higher than in most schools. The proportion of pupils with a statement of educational need is above the national average. A slightly higher than average proportion of pupils join or leave the school other than the usual times.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Pyrford Church of England Aided Primary School provides a good standard of education for its pupils. As a result of its high quality caring ethos and strong support for pupils, their personal development is outstanding. Central to the school's success is good leadership and management. The headteacher provides excellent direction to the school ensuring that it has a strong focus on raising standards. Senior staff and subject leaders similarly provide very clear direction within their areas of responsibility. There is a strong sense of shared purpose and a clear vision for future development among school members. All pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, those newly arrived and those of different abilities feel welcomed and want to learn. Most parents are pleased with the school's provision for their children. One parent wrote, 'In my opinion the school provides excellent care and teaching which allows the children to flourish both academically and as individuals'.

The school has worked effectively to ensure that the variety of cultures represented in the school are valued and celebrated, and this strongly supports pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children make good progress in their personal and social skills in the Foundation Stage. Pupils fully understand about healthy living and how to keep safe. They make an excellent contribution to the community through positions of responsibility such as house captains, monitors and school council members. They take these responsibilities very seriously. Pupils enjoy school greatly and this is reflected by their excellent attendance. The school takes very effective measures to keep absences at a low level.

Pupils achieve well and attain well above average standards. This is the result of good teaching and good provision for vulnerable pupils. A good curriculum effectively meets the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and of pupils for whom English is not their first language. Standards in writing, although above average, are not as high as in reading, mathematics and science. Fewer than the expected proportion of pupils reach the highest levels at Year 2 and Year 6. Although teachers provide interesting work for pupils that is usually well matched to their abilities, they sometimes miss opportunities to add extra challenge to pupils' work in writing. Nonetheless, pupils have good levels of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). These along with excellent personal and social skills and attitudes prepare pupils very well for the next stage of their education.

School self-evaluation is good. Purposeful action by school leaders has led to improvements in achievement, provision and leadership and management since the last inspection. For example, standards and the quality of teaching at the end of Year 2 have improved. This shows the school's good capacity to make further improvements. Governors are highly effective. They are very actively involved in the school improvement process. They are conscientious in ensuring that statutory duties are fulfilled and that the school's financial resources are used well.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

This area of the school has a knowledgeable co-ordinator who has developed a well organised and motivated team. Together they provide a calm, safe and stimulating learning environment for the youngest children in the school.

Children thrive in a curriculum that covers all areas of learning well. The Foundation Stage team assess children thoroughly so that they know how to manage the next steps in their learning.

Lively, well organised teaching ensures that children make good progress and successfully prepares them for work in Year 1. The recently developed outdoor area is beginning to be used well to develop children's personal, physical and creative development. More recently there has been particular focus on the development of early writing skills that has developed children's confidence and enjoyment in writing.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing by providing extra challenge for more able pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well to reach standards that are well above average at the end of Year 6. Most children start school in the Reception class with attainment that is above that expected for their age although some are lower in writing and calculating. They make good progress in all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. By the start of Year 1, most children have achieved the standards expected for their age and many have exceeded them. The progress they make by the end of Year 2 is also good and continues in Years 3 to 6. In 2007, pupils attained exceptionally high results in mathematics. Results in English, although good, were not as high as in mathematics and science because a smaller proportion of pupils reached the highest level 5 in writing in the assessments. Similarly, a smaller proportion of pupils reached the highest level 3 in writing at the end of Year 2. The school has identified the need to provide extra challenge for more able pupils to help them reach the highest levels. Most minority ethnic pupils make similarly good progress to their classmates. Those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those with statements of special educational needs receive a high level of well-targeted support and, as a result, make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Classrooms are characterised by very well motivated, attentive and well behaved pupils enjoying their learning. Pupils are proud of their school and they are excellent ambassadors for it. They work responsibly together and express their views confidently through the school council. This has led to improvements such as the friendship benches and play equipment. In addition, pupils are regularly involved in charity fund raising and speak enthusiastically about the school's link with a community in Uganda. Pupils show an excellent commitment to healthy living. For example, pupils choose to eat and drink healthily at break-times and they show an excellent awareness of healthy diets. A large majority also engages in physical activities such as in after-school clubs and sports events.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Throughout the school relationships between adults and pupils are excellent and this sets a positive tone for learning. Teachers generally plan work that is closely matched to pupils' individual abilities and consequently they make good progress during a lesson. However, opportunities to extend more able writers are not always sufficiently well planned. Teachers

make effective use of questioning to assess and deepen pupils' understanding of their work. Teachers place strong emphasis on encouraging pupils to share their ideas with a partner and in groups. This develops pupils' speaking and listening skills and encourages them to put their thoughts into words before writing them down. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are given good support by both teachers and well informed teaching assistants.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the pupils' needs well. A strong emphasis on developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and scientific skills leads to good progress in these areas. Older pupils make good use of ICT to support their work in other subjects. There are sometimes missed opportunities for pupils in Year 1 to develop their ICT skills in a similar way, as they do not have such easy access to the computers. Swift action is being taken to rectify this situation. The personal, social, health and citizenship education programme contributes effectively to pupils' excellent understanding of being healthy and staying safe. The curriculum is greatly enriched by a wide range of popular extra-curricular activities. Pupils have good opportunities to learn from visiting speakers and from visits linked to their curriculum. These activities along with residential visits for pupils from Year 3 onwards provide good support for pupils' academic, personal and social development and add greatly to their enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's caring ethos means that pupils are valued as individuals and thrive and grow in confidence. Teachers know their pupils very well and the overwhelming majority of parents are confident that their children are well cared for. Pupils feel very safe in school. Procedures for ensuring the protection, safety and well-being of pupils are robust and fully meet government guidance. The school has excellent procedures to assess and track pupils' progress through each year group. Teachers are fully informed of the progress of individual pupils and this helps them to provide good academic guidance. As a result, pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to improve. However, these procedures are yet not sharp enough to guide the more able pupils to achieve as well as they can in their writing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school knows what it is good at and where it needs to improve. It has used this knowledge well to drive actions which have led to improvements. School leaders are not complacent. They know that there is more to be done to ensure that more pupils attain high standards in writing. However, some specific plans are not as useful as they might be because they do not include measurable outcomes for pupils against which school leaders and governors can judge the success of their actions. Staff training has focused on ensuring that senior leaders and subjects managers lead effectively and this is bringing sharpness to their work. The school sets high store on professional development not only through its support of student teachers and teachers new to the profession, but also through encouraging teachers to take on leadership roles. Information to parents is good but a minority of parents still feel that they are not kept sufficiently informed.

Governors are very supportive yet provide strong challenge for the school. They know the school well through their own effective monitoring and the high quality information provided by the school. This allows them to participate fully in managing the school's strategic development.

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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 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	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	1

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	1
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	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 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pyrford Church of England Aided Primary School, Woking, GU22 8SP

Thank you for all your help when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and took careful note of what you and your parents had to say about the school. We were impressed by your politeness and friendliness.

Your school is good. There are some outstanding features too, namely your personal development and the care, guidance and support that the adults provide for you. Here are some of the many things that we consider are good about your school.

- You are making good progress because your teachers are good at helping you to learn.
- You enjoy your school because teachers are good at planning interesting things for you to do.
- Your behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- All of the adults in school look after you very well so you feel safe.
- You take lots of exercise and know a great deal about healthy living.
- Your headteacher, the staff and the school governors run the school well. They are clear about what needs to be improved and how to improve it.

All of the adults in your school want it to be even better. The school council also have useful ideas about how the school can be improved. To help them do this we have asked the school to do one main thing. Some of you need help to improve your writing. We have asked the teachers to give some of you more challenging writing tasks, particularly for those of you who are already good at writing, so that you can become even better.

We hope that you will continue to enjoy your school. We also hope that you will help your teachers as they work hard to make your school even better for you.

Yours sincerely

Olson Davis

Lead Inspector