

# South Lake Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133383
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wokingham District Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	316105
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Carol Worthington

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	445
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jackie Turton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Pauline Lamb
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	Campbell Road Woodley Reading RG5 3NA
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 969 1672
<b>Fax number</b>	0118 969 4617

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by 3 Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

South Lake is a larger than average primary school situated in an area of mixed housing. There are well below the expected numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a small proportion of mixed ethnic minorities. Virtually all speak English as their first language. The percentage with learning difficulties is about average but the 2007 Year 6 had an unusually high number of pupils with statements of emotional and behavioural need. Pupil mobility is low.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

South Lake Primary is a good school where all pupils are valued. The headteacher gives very strong leadership, and is well supported by talented senior staff. Since the previous inspection she has created a cohesive team of teaching and non-teaching staff who share the same ideals, and work together for the good of the children.

Staff clearly know the needs of pupils, who are extremely well looked after. There is exceptionally good support for vulnerable pupils and their families and the school, makes full use of an excellent range of outside agencies. There is a very strong partnership with parents who are most supportive of the school. One parent wrote. 'I am delighted with the pastoral care my child receives'.

The quality of education is good; teachers have very good expertise and produce lively lessons, which pupils enjoy. Consequently, they are keen to learn. The high expectations of presentation, grammar and spelling, result in the majority of pupils achieving good literacy skills. This prepares them well for secondary education. Marking is thorough and gives good guidance for improvement. A pupil said, 'My teacher will always help you if you get stuck'. Progress in learning is good and often excellent for the oldest pupils. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The relatively new system for tracking pupils' progress is now making it easier to identify underachievement in years 1 to 6 and to provide the necessary support. Pupils achieve well and current attainment is satisfactory, having improved from last year's dip in standards which the school has been able to explain satisfactorily. The school makes sure that pupils with learning difficulties achieve well. Specialist teachers are used well in mathematics to challenge the highest attainers, but this is not consistently applied in all areas of the curriculum. The outstanding personal, social, health and citizenship programme promotes outstanding behaviour and attitudes to learning. Pupils are keen to take up the many positions of responsibility. They respect and look up to their peer mediators, who take part in challenging training to help them resolve pupil disagreements. They agree that bullying is very rare, and said the 'Going for Gold' assemblies helped prevent it. One said, 'It makes us think about how to get on better'. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is excellent and creates thoughtful and tolerant pupils who are prepared well for life in multicultural Britain.

The curriculum is good. The very good range of extracurricular clubs, which are well attended, also aid pupils' personal development. The Environmental Club, for example, enables pupils to add to their excellent understanding of a healthy lifestyle through growing their own vegetables.

Considering the on-going improvements since the previous inspection, the school has a good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The overall quality of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. However, the outstanding pastoral care seen in the other key stages begins in the Foundation Stage. There is an excellent partnership with parents, starting with home visits, and every child is nurtured as an individual. There is a rich, stimulating environment in Foundation 1, but less so in the Foundation 2 classes, where activities do not always have an obvious learning intention based on the under 5 curriculum 'Stepping Stones'. All children have learning records, which are painstakingly kept up to date by observations. However, a system to show children's progress in relation to the

'Stepping Stones' is not fully embedded. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but the most able children are not consistently given challenging tasks. This results from planning being based on activities rather than what is to be learnt, and long term plans that insufficiently map out the coverage of all areas of learning. Last year standards by the end of Foundation Stage showed an improvement, but they were still well below the national average in all areas of learning. Currently they are below average, but given the children's starting points this reflects satisfactory achievement.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in the Foundation Stage by ensuring that teachers plan work that refer to challenging learning intentions, rather than activities, in all areas of the early learning goals.
- Ensure that challenge for the most able pupils is consistently provided in all curriculum areas.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

In recent years, the school's standards, as shown by pupils' performance in national tests, has been around average for 11 year olds, and below for 7 year olds. Overall, this reflects good progress from their below average attainment on entry. In 2007, however, there was a dip, resulting in below average standards for eleven year olds and only satisfactory progress. This reflected the abnormally large number of pupils who had statements of special educational needs.

Currently, attainment in Year 6 is average and in Year 2, slightly below average according to the school's assessment data. The progress tracking system is now firmly established in Key Stage 2. The data is verified by high quality work in pupils' books, showing that pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are currently making good progress. They are achieving well in English, but especially well in mathematics through the use of specialist teachers. In science also, much above average work was seen in the current year 6 books. Good progress in writing was seen in descriptions of a visit of wolves to the school which pupils obviously enjoyed. From youngest to eldest, they were motivated to produce imaginative work.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

This is outstanding. Pupils learn to understand their feelings particularly well through assemblies and circle time. The school prepares its pupils very well for life in multicultural Britain through the personal, health and social and citizenship education programme (PHSCE) and the religious education curriculum. Pupils very much enjoy their school and attend regularly. Exemplary behaviour, both in and out of lessons, helps explain pupils' good progress. They show very positive attitudes to learning, have very warm relationships with their teachers and respect them. The school council and eco-committee members behave very responsibly and serve the school community well. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to live healthily and keep safe. Pupils themselves say they feel safe; there is no bullying to speak of and there is always someone to turn to if they need help. Pupils make good progress in developing their basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. This, together with the frequent good opportunities to work in teams, prepares them well for the next stages of education and later working life.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. The school has many talented and enthusiastic teachers who have very good expertise and share good practice. They engage pupils' attention by planning lessons in which enjoyment of learning is well promoted. Particularly good use is made of drama and role play where pupils learn to speak clearly and confidently. Teachers manage pupils well and maintain a busy, working atmosphere where pupils behave outstandingly well. Teachers have very high expectations of the presentation of pupils' work, spelling and grammar. This ensures that pupils' literacy develops sufficiently well to take them on to secondary school. Both teachers and their assistants work well together so that pupils get good guidance on how to meet their targets. As a result, pupils in need of additional support make good progress. Teachers also encourage pupils to be more independent learners and they are becoming proficient in assessing their own and classmates' learning. Planning usually meets the needs of all pupils, but the very able are not always consistently challenged.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The great majority of pupils enjoy the wide variety of experiences the curriculum provides. They achieve well because of the good match to their needs, for example, in literacy and numeracy. Their outstanding personal development is fostered by the school's excellent provision for PHSCE. Literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are developed well. All pupils get good opportunities to develop their talents in drama and music through timetabled lessons. The many clubs and activities are very popular, and well attended by enthusiastic pupils and adult staff. The curriculum is well enriched by visits; a particularly popular one was that to a 'Victorian schoolroom,' images of which are displayed on the foyer TV screen. Whilst most pupils with learning difficulties are served well, the curriculum does not always provide enough stimulus for the more able.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

At South Lake every child really does matter. This ensures that all pupils, whatever their background or ability, feel safe and secure and are encouraged to achieve as well as they can. The school has a warm and friendly atmosphere and vulnerable pupils, in particular, are extremely well looked after. The school works in exceptionally close partnership with a wide range of outside agencies to meet their needs. Academic guidance is also strong in Key Stage 2. The school has strengthened the tracking of pupils' progress. This is enabling them to identify potential underachievement at an earlier stage and to provide effective support to help these pupils catch up. It is also helping teachers to set challenging targets. Pupils are becoming clear about how these help them to improve, even though the system is still in early stages and not yet in place in the Foundation Stage.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and has created a learning environment that offers pupils good quality care and education. School self-evaluation is good and the headteacher seeks the views of all staff, governors, pupils and parents as part of a thorough approach to development planning. For example, recent improvements in ICT provision resulted from a school council suggestion. Good use is also made of the expertise of senior leaders to develop the skills of middle managers and improve performance, particularly in writing, mathematics and science. Effective strategies are now in place to secure further improvements in standards through extending the use of the progress tracking system. Governors offer a good balance of support and challenge to school leaders.

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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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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	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?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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**

15 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of South Lake Primary School, Reading, RG5 3NA

Thank you for being so polite and helpful when we visited your school recently. We really appreciated your willingness to speak to us. It was very helpful.

We were pleased with your school and believe it is good. We think your headteacher, and the other adults work really hard to make sure you are all really well cared for. Your behaviour and personal development are outstanding. You progress well because teaching is good. You told us that you really enjoy school and this is because you have lots of interesting things to do in lessons and out of them. You told us that your teachers always help you if you get stuck or feel sad. We agree with you about this.

There are however, some things that we thought could be improved:

- young children in the Foundation Stage could do better if provided with a wider range of activities
- your teachers could make sure that you all get work that challenges you to do as well as you can all the time.

You can help by making sure that you work as hard as you can in lessons.

We wish you all well in your life in school and beyond.

Yours sincerely

Carol Worthington

Lead Inspector