

# Oaklands Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109865
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wokingham Borough Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	325046
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	George Rayner

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	172
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Simon Clarke
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Julie Sheppard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 May 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Butler Road Crowthorne RG45 6QZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01344 774644
<b>Fax number</b>	01344 772375

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<b>Age group</b>	4–7
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and Early Years Foundation Stage and investigated the following areas of its work.

- How well do learning experiences promote children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage?
- To what extent have pupils' personal development and well-being improved since the school was last inspected?
- What is the impact of teaching and the curriculum on pupils' progress and personal development?

Evidence was gathered from: lesson observations; discussion with staff, governors, and pupils; scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and the school's documentation. Parents' questionnaires and additional comments were also analysed. Other aspects were not inspected in detail, but the inspectors 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

This school is smaller than most. The great majority of pupils have White British heritage and none are at an early stage of learning to speak English. A low proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The most common needs of these pupils are related to moderate difficulty in learning at the same rate as their classmates. There is onsite childcare in a provision for under-fives during the school day and also an after school club. These are both run by separate organisations.

## 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. Parents agree. The great majority say that their children are happy here and that they make good progress. There is a particular strength in pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. These have improved appreciably since the school was last inspected, so that they are now outstanding. Pupils enjoy school immensely. They demonstrate this by their regular attendance, excellent behaviour, willingness to work hard and enthusiasm for joining in with all that the school offers. A comment from a parent illustrated this. 'My son, in Year 2, has been telling my daughter, starting in Reception, 'It's really fun. You'll enjoy it'. It always strikes me as a happy place to be'.

By the time they approach the end of Year 2, pupils display high levels of maturity. In one lesson they took responsibility for planning teams for sports day, sharing their ideas in animated discussions. In another, their concentration to make sure they met the teacher's high expectation for quality when writing was impressive. Pupils are learning extremely well how to keep themselves healthy. They greatly enjoy opportunities to be active, shown for example by their high enthusiasm during the sports day that took place during the inspection. Pupils feel very safe and show great consideration for others. Since the last inspection, the school has greatly increased opportunities for pupils to contribute to school life. Pupils have responded extremely well by diligently carrying out such roles as school councillors and 'buddies'. Pupils greatly enjoy learning about other cultures and beliefs. They do this, for example, when they sample menus devised by parents from different ethnic backgrounds and when visiting a local synagogue. Pupils' progress in their learning prepares them well for their futures. Activities such as those where they work together to raise money for charities also contribute well.

When pupils arrive, their skills and knowledge are slightly above expectations for their age. A good curriculum and effective teaching lead to them achieving well, so that their standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average by the end of Year 2. Pupils become increasingly proficient at using their mathematical skills to solve problems, such as working out how much change they would expect on a shopping trip. They read and write confidently and fluently, using connecting words well to build up interesting descriptions. The boys currently in Year 2, who started Year 1 with lower literacy skills than the girls, have caught up well and are now almost matching the girls. They have been helped in this by improved topics that raise their enthusiasm for reading and writing. Staff carefully identify the needs of the pupils who find it difficult to learn at the same rate as others and give them effective additional support. As a result, these pupils make as much progress as their classmates.

Teachers plan exciting things for pupils to do, such as building a scale model using recycled cardboard boxes, which is helping them to understand the causes of the Great Fire of London. Teachers clearly express their requirements for behaviour and effort, in an encouraging way that promotes strong relationships with pupils and makes them enthusiastic workers. Lessons are planned so that all pupils, including the most able, are challenged sufficiently to make good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants work together effectively to ensure that all pupils are coping with their work and given extra help if they are finding it too difficult. Teachers use marking well to encourage pupils and often give them helpful guidance on how to improve their work. Teaching is good rather than outstanding because, while some lessons are excellent, the quality is not fully consistent. For example, the pace of learning slows at times in some lessons, because some activities go on for too long.

Since the last inspection, staff have made substantial improvements to the curriculum. As a result, while it is still good overall, it is developing outstanding features, which are making a particularly positive impact on pupils' personal development. Topics have been reorganised to make work more meaningful to pupils and to give them ample opportunity to use and develop their own talents and interests. This is having a marked impact on pupils' enjoyment and involvement in their learning, shown for example by their willingness to undertake their own research. Although there are only a few after school clubs, programmes of visitors and trips out are well planned to enrich and extend what pupils learn in the classroom.

Care, guidance and support are good overall, and pastoral care is outstanding. Procedures for child protection are efficiently planned and diligently undertaken. The school has excellent links with a range of specialist agencies. It uses these extremely well to ensure high-quality additional care for any pupils who need this. Parents praised the exemplary links with feeder settings and junior schools, that really help pupils to settle quickly and happily when they join the school and then move on to the next stage in their education. Close liaison with the after school club helps to ensure that the pupils who attend complement their school work well. The school has recently moved from a paper-based to a computer system for tracking pupils' progress. This is speeding up the efficiency and speed with which pupils falling behind their expected progress are identified and helped. However, its use is not yet consistent across the school, as some staff are still learning to use the system.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, is providing a very clear vision for the future direction of the school. This has been a driving force in striving for improvement. Staff working at all levels share the vision. Since the last inspection, subject leaders have played a valuable role in developing the highly motivating topics. However, they are not yet monitoring the impact of these sufficiently. They could do this, for example, by directly observing how well the topics are working in lessons, to help colleagues to improve the consistency of teaching. Governors are well led and have improved their organisation since the previous inspection. This is helping them to become increasingly effective in supporting and monitoring the work of the school. The school plans several activities to promote community cohesion, and does this well. It is particularly good at helping pupils to understand cultural, ethnic and religious diversity in their own area. Plans are in hand to make these equally effective on a national scale. Rigorous and properly critical self-evaluation has given the leaders a good understanding of the areas needing further improvement. Strengths in standards have been maintained and notable improvements are beginning to be seen, particularly in pupils' personal development. The school's track record demonstrates a good capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children settle happily and are confident, enthusiastic, learners. They achieve well and most reach standards beyond the expected goals for their age by the end of Reception. Their good personal development provides a firm foundation for the strengths that develop in Years 1 and 2. Children form a good understanding of what is expected of them. They behave well and learn to work together, sharing and taking turns when necessary. Children develop very strong relationships with the adults. Parents appreciate this greatly. One said, 'My child enjoys working with her teachers, who she describes with affection and respect'.

Teachers know the children's needs well. In adult-led activities, they challenge and engage them effectively through skilful questioning and sensitive support. However, in exploratory

play, especially outdoors, children's progress is often good, but not consistently so because some activities lack challenge. This is due to a limited range of learning experiences and resources to support these, which sometimes restrict children's opportunities to make independent choices. For example, the lack of outdoor cover restricts learning opportunities in bad weather, and plans are not always creative in identifying what can still be done in such circumstances. The school's monitoring identified that assessments were not previously fully accurate. Systems have recently been improved and now provide a good level of accuracy. Staff use assessment well to give parents helpful information on their children's progress and guidance for supporting this. The headteacher, as manager of the Early Years Foundation Stage, has identified well-focused actions for further improvement and staff are keen to support her in this.

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

- Improve the challenge in exploratory play in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Increase the monitoring role of subject leaders to help to improve the consistency of teaching.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**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?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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 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	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

25 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oaklands Infant School, Crowthorne, RG45 6QZ

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you. We are grateful for the help you gave by talking to us and showing us your work. We were able to see that yours is a good school.

Your standards are above average when you leave Year 2. This means that you make good progress from your starting points. This is because the school plans your learning well and lessons are good.

One of the very best things about your school is the outstanding way that you are growing up. The adults are very proud of you and care for you very well. We could see that you enjoy school. You show this by your good attendance and excellent behaviour, cheerfulness and willingness to work hard. You showed this very well during sports day. This helps your teachers a great deal. It is an important reason why you do so well in your learning and why your school is such a happy place.

We have asked the adults to improve two things.

- Make sure that the children in Reception have lots of chances to find things out for themselves.
- Make sure that the teachers who run the subjects visit lessons to find out how they can help the other teachers to make their lessons even better.

Your headteacher really knows how to make your school better. All of the other adults are helping her well. We know that you will also continue to help. Well done to you all and very best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

George Rayner

Lead Inspector