

The Colleton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109878
Local Authority	Wokingham Borough Council
Inspection number	325050
Inspection date	26 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Graham Stephens

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	204
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Christopher Allen
Headteacher	Mrs Nicola Allan and Mrs Gill Overell
Date of previous school inspection	18 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Colleton Drive Twyford Reading RG10 0AX
Telephone number	0118 934 0530
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- How far leadership and management over the past three years have improved the quality of teaching, pupils' progress in writing and at the higher levels in mathematics.
- The apparent strengths of personal development and well-being and care, support and guidance.
- The effectiveness of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and especially the impact of the outdoor learning environment and the children's access to it.

Evidence was gathered from visits to lessons, sampling pupils' work, discussion with pupils, staff and governors, the school's documentation and assessment information and the inspection questionnaires returned from parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence indicating that the school's own assessments, in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This school is similar in size to other primary schools. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, most of whom find aspects of English and mathematics challenging, has increased significantly and is now higher than in most schools. There are very few pupils for whom English is an additional language. There is provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The open-plan nature of the school buildings enables the school to operate in three teams: Younger Team (Early Years Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2); Middle Team (Years 3 and 4) and Older Team (Years 5 and 6). Pupils and teachers work in various groups across the years within these teams. There were changes to the leadership team and significant staff changes in the Middle and Older Teams last year. The school is led and managed by two headteachers who job-share.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school where pupils make excellent progress in their academic studies and in their personal development. The majority of parents are delighted with the way their children respond to the many opportunities open to them. They feel that the school's philosophy of meeting the needs of every individual is very successful. A typical comment by a parent sums up the school: 'My children have all made excellent progress and have all loved school. It has helped them develop a sense of responsibility and pride in their own learning. It has encouraged their independence and recognised their achievements'. Pupils have a great time at school and this is reflected in their excellent behaviour and good attendance. The very active school council and the importance all adults give to considering and often acting upon the views of the pupils explains the outstanding contribution pupils make to the school community. An excellent programme of personal, social and health education ensures that pupils know much about how to stay healthy and remain safe.

Recently the proportion of pupils entering the school with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, especially in the younger age groups, has increased significantly. Overall, pupils have skill levels that are higher than expected when they enter Reception, especially in their social and personal skills. However, their skills in aspects of communication, language and literacy are in line with, or often below, expected levels, especially in writing. Children make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from their starting points and this continues to the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are high, and the proportion attaining the higher levels in all subjects, including writing, is well above average. The school was rightly concerned about the changes to staffing and leadership that impacted directly on the older pupils last year and this disruption led to a decline in the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in mathematics. However, now that one of the substantive headteachers has returned and another experienced headteacher has been appointed, leadership and management are stable and have focused on ensuring that standards in mathematics return to the previous high levels. In this, they have succeeded and evidence confirms that pupils in Year 6 are on track to meet the challenging targets that have been set in all subjects, including information and communication technology (ICT).

Pupils relish school and as soon as they enter become engaged in a range of activities. They are confident, reflective and very sensitive to the needs of others. Pupils that have recently joined the school, many with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and attracted by the school's growing reputation for supporting all pupils well irrespective of needs, are affected very quickly and positively by the warmth, support and care displayed, not just by staff but also by pupils. As a result, they quickly settle and respond to the exciting challenges provided for them. Personal development and well-being are outstanding. The cultural aspect of pupils' education, although good, is relatively less well developed than the spiritual, moral, and social aspects. Pupils have many opportunities to prioritise, organise and complete their own work schedules. They are highly motivated, often choosing to cooperate with others when tackling the challenging and often exciting tasks that have been set. Teaching is outstanding because it is based on excellent planning that ensures work is well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils are consistently encouraged to improve because all adults have very high expectations and are very skilled in asking questions that challenge pupils to reflect, explain and justify their thinking. The outstanding curriculum has been thoughtfully constructed to ensure that learning builds well on what pupils know, understand and can do. It provides exciting and enjoyable

opportunities for pupils to apply and consolidate the skills they have been taught. It is very well supported by ICT and pupils naturally turn to computers and use them as tools to support their learning.

The school rightly takes a pride in understanding and meeting the many diverse needs of the pupils. Teaching assistants, many supporting individual pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and a trained welfare assistant, who support the very small minority of pupils with emotional needs, are all an integral part of the team. This provision, together with very careful planning, excellent support from external agencies and excellent teaching, ensures that these pupils achieve very well. Procedures to ensure pupils are well safeguarded are secure and well known. Pupils' progress is tracked very carefully. An excellent system of ongoing assessment, in which self-evaluation and peer evaluation play a key role, ensures that work is planned precisely to meet individual needs and that excellent progress is maintained.

The headteachers provide outstanding leadership. Very well supported by well-informed, proactive and caring governors, they have engendered a very strong team spirit among the staff. All staff, without exception, have a leadership role, and therefore feel very much included in all aspects of school life. This is reflected in a 'we can do it' attitude that pervades everything they plan and do. They listen carefully to what pupils have to say and take account of their views when planning activities. Consequently, they have created an environment with a very strong ethos for learning, where bright and colourful displays reflect the many and varied activities and where pupils have the opportunity to excel. Planning for community cohesion is good. Nevertheless, discussions with pupils confirm that more needs to be done to ensure that they have even more first-hand opportunities to learn about the range and diversity of cultures in the United Kingdom.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children get an excellent start to their education in the Younger Team. Outstanding leadership and excellent teamwork provide a vibrant and interesting learning environment in which children are taught very well. Children are happy and settled and are excited to explore the world around them. They enter with skills which are just higher than national expectations in most areas apart from writing. Children's behaviour is exemplary. Encouraged by highly skilled adults, they develop excellent attitudes to learning. Teachers carefully consider the unique talents and differing abilities of every child when planning activities. They make excellent use of observations to rigorously track the progress of each child. Evidence confirms that children's achievement from their starting points is outstanding.

Children enjoy their learning hugely. The warm and friendly atmosphere during the morning registration sets the scene for the rest of the day as children independently register themselves and choose their favourite activity. The presence of older children is a huge bonus, giving a 'family' feeling which all enjoy. Both boys and girls are very enthusiastic learners, full of curiosity, which is stimulated by the rich environment. Attractive wall displays show that the curriculum covers all the areas of learning in very imaginative ways. There is a particular focus on developing writing skills through activities such as writing plant labels and selling plants in the garden centre role play area. The setting is safe and secure. Adults take exceptionally good care of children, enabling all of them, including the most vulnerable, to thrive. The outside area is newly refurbished and while it is beginning to be used effectively for 'free-flow' activities, where children move between inside and outside areas, this is in its early stages as further equipment is added and made available for the children.

Leadership and management are exemplary because of very high aspirations and the continual evaluation of provision that results in continuous improvement. This is reflected in the high quality of children's learning and achievement. The partnership with parents and other pre-school providers is very good. Preparation for the next stage of education is excellent.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' understanding of the range and diversity of cultures in the United Kingdom, giving them more first-hand opportunities to learn about them.
- Increase the range of resources available in the Early Years outdoor learning environment to further encourage the free flow of activities between inside and outside areas.

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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?	1
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	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 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

How good are 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	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	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 learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

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

20 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Colleton Primary School, Reading, RG10 0AX

It was a delight and a privilege to visit your school. We really enjoyed talking to you all and listened very carefully to all you had to say.

We think you go to an outstanding school and this is why.

- You do very well in your work. You are proud of the things that you do and explained yourselves very clearly.
- You are very polite and caring of each other. Your behaviour is excellent.
- Your teachers are very good at planning and are always looking for more interesting things to teach you.
- All the adults in your school make sure that you are encouraged, challenged and really well looked after.
- Your headteachers and the other people who help run your school are doing an excellent job.

Every school, even one as good as yours, has things that could be improved.

- We have asked your teachers to help you develop a better understanding of the different cultures in today's United Kingdom and in that way help you understand more about the wider world.
- We have asked that the newly built learning area outside the Younger Team teaching space be fully equipped with games and activities that will make it a really exciting place where the youngest children can play and work together and learn.

Yours faithfully

Graham Stephens

Lead Inspector