

Cippenham Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109901
Local Authority	Slough
Inspection number	325054
Inspection date	22 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Charalambos Loizou

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	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	270
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	90
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Edward Rance
Headteacher	Mrs Rachel Cross (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Dennis Way Cippenham Slough SL1 5JP
Telephone number	01628 604732
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Age group	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 investigated the following areas:

- the quality of teaching and the curriculum, including the effectiveness of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS);
- pupils' achievement and standards in writing;
- the ways in which pupils assess and understand their own learning.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, the analysis of test results and assessments of pupils' performance, as well as parents' responses to questionnaires and discussions with pupils, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated 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

Cippenham is a large infant school. Reception children join the EYFS full-time each September and, like other year groups, are taught in three classes. The majority of pupils are White British although 40%, which is above average, come from a range of other minority ethnic backgrounds. A significant number of pupils, one fifth, is in the early stages of learning English and receive additional support in lessons or groups. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is low compared with most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is average. The main areas of need are in speech and language, or the pupils have specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia or a physical disability. The school is led by the school's deputy headteacher until governors appoint a permanent headteacher. The previous headteacher retired last term.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Pupils achieve extremely well at this outstanding infant school. The acting headteacher has worked tirelessly with the staff team to successfully maintain and build upon the school's strong performance. Highly effective leadership, teaching and care benefit the pupils enormously. The governors are very skilled and knowledgeable and provide excellent support. There are robust management procedures in place to ensure that high quality teaching and support are sustained. There has been good progress since the last inspection resulting in improvements to what is now an excellent curriculum that includes an outstanding range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities such as sport, music and the creative arts.

The vast majority of parents are very pleased. Many have paid tribute to the commitment of the staff, one rightly commenting, for example, that this is 'an excellent and very caring environment', and another stating that her child 'enjoys school so much that he even gets ready at the weekend'. Children and families of all backgrounds feel welcomed and valued. Inclusion, racial harmony and relationships throughout the school community are excellent.

The large majority of children join the school in the Reception year with skills and abilities that are broadly in line with those expected of four-year-olds. Teachers and support staff teach basic skills like reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) very well. Consequently, by the time the pupils leave at the end of Year 2, they reach standards that are well above those expected of seven-year-olds. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds in Years 1 and 2 make rapid progress. Although writing standards are above average, they should be higher. In recent years, results from national assessments show that the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in reading, mathematics and science is well above average. Although improving, this has not been the case in writing because pupils do not have enough opportunities to write extensively across subjects and topics of the curriculum. This has been recognised by the school as a priority for improvement. A good start has been made reviewing lessons to incorporate more tasks that help pupils to write at length. This was seen to very good effect in Year 2 when pupils were very successfully extending sentences using adjectives to improve their writing.

Children in the EYFS achieve well because the teaching is consistently good. There are well-established induction arrangements to help the children settle into full-time education quickly. There is scope to improve the EYFS curriculum when planning play and exploration, as there are some missed opportunities to challenge and extend learning, especially when children choose activities for themselves.

Pupils behave extremely well throughout the school and treat each other with respect. Their efforts are praised and valued, which is reflected in the beautiful and high quality displays of their work. Information and communication technology is used very well to explore and use skills from a range of subjects. For example, pupils used webcams to observe chicks hatching as part of their science work. The well equipped ICT room and library provide extensive opportunities for the pupils to study, research and explore the internet safely. Consequently, pupils become enthusiastic learners who are prepared extremely well for the next stage of their education.

Good attendance and punctuality reflect how well the pupils enjoy school. Pupils are busy and absorbed by all that is offered. An excellent curriculum and high quality teaching, care, guidance and support, are having a beneficial effect on pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and

cultural development. Pupils in the early stages of learning English make rapid progress learning to read, write, and apply their mathematics and science skills. Pupils' efforts and contributions are valued during well-planned events such as the 'Proud to be Me' assemblies that celebrate with parents their children's achievements and talents. In addition, there are excellent arrangements in place to support pupils who have learning and/or physical disabilities. Teachers and support staff are very good at organising lessons so pupils receive the support they need. They mark pupils' work very well so the pupils are very clear about how best to improve their work. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to assess and reflect on their own learning. Parents have rightly commented on how well they are informed about their children's progress, further demonstrating how well the leadership team monitor and support the performance and achievement of all pupils.

The staff ensure that pupils work and play in clean, safe and stimulating indoor and outdoor areas. Pupils reflect on and learn about the wider world through a wealth of practical experiences, such as topics that involve visits to the local and wider community. Specially themed projects extend learning like the 'Going green' topic that includes visits to a local charity shop to donate old toys brought from home as part of a re-cycling project and the school's efforts to become an Eco school. Pupils learn about stories, music, dance, food and customs from local and world cultures. Daily fruit eating and healthy lunches, as well as regular physical activities help the pupils to be extremely aware about how to keep healthy and fit. There are very thorough safeguarding procedures to minimise risks and ensure that pupils are safe.

Outstanding leadership, management and governance have guided good improvements to the school since the last inspection. The staff work in excellent partnership with parents, carers, other schools and organisations. The inspirational leadership of the acting headteacher has minimised any disruption to the work of the school until a permanent appointment is made. The staff are very committed and devoted to the pupils and the local community. They respond extremely well to parents' and children's views through regular surveys and workshops. The staff's incisive evaluations of the school's effectiveness reflect their high expectations. The school has excellent capacity to build still further on its success.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The staff skilfully provide purposeful activities. This helps children make good progress so that by the time they start Year 1 they are working comfortably within the early stages of the National Curriculum. Children thoroughly enjoy indoor and outdoor activities although, at times, tasks and resources are not challenging enough to extend children's thinking and learning, especially when engaged in role-play and exploration. The staff are very good at helping the children to develop early reading, writing, problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills. Excellent assessments of children's progress, performance and welfare are maintained and these help to inform parents how well their children are doing as well as planning tasks that build on previous learning. Children are often prompted to explain their ideas, for example, when talking about the forthcoming harvest festival. The outdoor area has improved very well since the last inspection. It provides wonderful opportunities for the children to explore spaces and the natural world around them, including for example, working in the sensory science garden. The children develop their confidence, self-esteem and communication skills very well and the overall EYFS provision is well managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to write independently and extensively across the curriculum to improve writing standards.
- Incorporate more tasks and use resources more effectively to extend children's learning in the EYFS through indoor and outdoor play and exploration.

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?	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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	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	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?	1
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**

30 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cippenham Infant School, Slough, SL1 5JP

You were all so welcoming when the inspectors came to see you. We really enjoyed talking to many of you during the day. We agree with many parents who say that you go to an excellent school and can see why you love going to school so much.

Well done to you and all the staff and governors. You are so lucky to have such caring people looking after you. We really loved looking at your beautifully displayed work, paintings and ICT work. We were very pleased with your excellent behaviour and the way you all play and work together so well. The inspector who visited the Reception classes was pleased to see the children doing well. The Reception children are really good at learning stories, singing rhymes and songs like the 'Big Red Combined Harvester' song in preparation for your harvest festival.

Throughout Years 1 and 2, the inspectors think you are doing extremely well with your reading, mathematics, science and ICT work. We would like you all to keep working hard because your teachers are providing you with very good challenges and I can see from your test results that you are doing well in your studies to reach very good standards. Your headteacher, teachers, assistants and governors are doing an excellent job, especially in helping the school to grow and develop still further. They have some excellent plans which they have shared with parents about further improvements to the school.

We have asked your teachers to help you do even better by giving you more time in lessons to write. We have also asked the Reception staff to give the children more challenging indoor and outdoor activities. You can all help too by making sure that you all come to school every day and by carrying on trying hard.

I wish you and your parents the very best and I am so pleased to have met you all. You were all great!

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou

Lead Inspector