

Weyford Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115961
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326297
Inspection dates	24–25 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Janet Sinclair

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	215
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	14
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Neil Fleming
Headteacher	Mrs Liz George
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	19 October 2006
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Mill Chase Road Bordon GU35 0EP
Telephone number	01420 472119
Fax number	01420 476991

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Weyford is an average sized infant school. Children from three to five years of age attend the Early Years Foundation Stage. Additionally, there is school-run childcare provision for fourteen children aged two-and-a-half to three. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. Their needs include moderate learning, speech and communication and behaviour difficulties. Pupils are mainly White British although a few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a small number are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. More children than is typical nationally join or leave the school at other than the customary times of the year. The school has the Activemark award.

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. It has improved well since its last inspection when it was satisfactory. There is a strong caring atmosphere in the school and this is evident in pupils' happy smiling faces and their friendliness towards adults and each other. Parents are mainly pleased with what the school provides. As one parent commented, 'I am delighted with the education my child receives. There is a very purposeful atmosphere in the school and all staff are caring and helpful'.

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes because the provision is well managed. Consequently, staff work effectively as a team and have created a stimulating learning environment for the children. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly in line with the national average, and this represents good progress in relation to pupils' low starting points. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well given their capabilities. This is due to effective tracking of their progress, good teaching and good care, which fully engages them in their learning. Teachers carefully plan lessons that are interesting, involve pupils fully in their learning and mainly give good attention to their differing needs so that pupils are motivated and keen to learn. This was particularly noticeable in the Key Stage 1 reading activities at the start of the school day, when the corridors and classrooms were a buzz of purposeful activity. However, expectations are not always high enough and questioning is not always effective enough to fully develop and extend pupils' ideas.

The school's good curriculum is enhanced by special events such as Sports Week. This event involved the whole school community and contributed to the award of 'Activemark'. Events such as this contribute well to pupils' personal development. Pupils work and play together well and are caring and thoughtful towards each other. They know that they are well looked after within the caring ethos of the school and are confident of support should they need it. The school tracks pupils' progress carefully and ensures that those with specific needs, or at risk through low attendance or illness, are identified and given effective support. This enables most pupils to make good progress. Pupils have clear targets for their learning and are fully involved in assessing their progress in lessons. This involves them well in improving their work.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher give clear educational direction to the work of the school. They have created a reflective school with a good team ethos in which staff are constantly striving to improve the overall provision for the pupils. Together, they rigorously monitor and evaluate the work of the school and are fully aware of its strengths and areas for further development. Subject leaders are enthusiastic and have been well trained to carry out their roles, which they do well. However, they do not monitor teaching in their subjects so do not have a complete overview of provision. The leadership team are fully aware that there is enormous benefit to be derived from subject leaders monitoring the quality of teaching. However, financial constraints have so far made it difficult to give staff the time to do this.

The school has made good overall improvement since the last inspection, but particularly in tracking pupils' progress and in ensuring that they are fully involved in the process. With the strong leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and the willingness of all staff, there is a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start in the Nursery with a range of skills and abilities that are well below typical expectations. In spite of making good progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage, they do not reach the goals expected on entry to Year 1. The provision for children's personal and social development through the very good induction process, strong and caring relationships and supportive atmosphere is excellent. It helps children, particularly those who are vulnerable, to become confident, well-motivated and secure learners who enjoy all that is on offer. For example, children in the Nursery thoroughly enjoyed tasting cooked pasta and, in Reception, they had fun exploring how to create the sounds associated with different types of sea waves. Teaching is effective because adults organise a range of child-chosen and teacher-directed activities, which fully engage children and promote effective learning. However, sometimes interactions and questioning within activities are not challenging enough and this slows progress. The curriculum is effectively planned to ensure continuity in children's learning, a safe and healthy environment and good attention to their welfare. For example, they are all clear about the importance of hand-washing before eating and thoroughly enjoyed the recent 'Fun Food Day', to which their parents were invited. Regular observations take place and these are used well to assess and track children's progress and match work to their individual needs. The provision for the small number of children under three is good and ensures that they are carefully integrated into the Nursery. Effective leadership and management have ensured that the new guidelines are being implemented well. However, there is no involvement of Early Years Foundation Stage staff in monitoring the quality of teaching. This limits the manager's ability to have a clear overview in order to bring about further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure pupils are always fully challenged in their learning through effective questioning and high expectations.
- Increase subject and key stage leaders' accountability by ensuring they monitor lessons, so that they have a precise knowledge of the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards at the end of Year 2 have improved and were in line with the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics in 2007 and 2008. The school has worked extremely hard to ensure pupils' progress is carefully monitored and action taken where necessary to bring about improvement. Additionally, good use is made of guided reading, phonic sessions, and clear planning for different groups. However, in the current Year 2, there is a high proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties, including some who have joined the school in Year 2, as well as some pupils with very poor attendance. As a result, in spite of good provision, standards overall are slightly below average. There are no significant gender issues, although boys generally do not perform quite as well as girls. In order to cater more specifically for their needs, the school has been involved in initiatives to improve their writing and has ensured a boy-friendly curriculum through its topics. Pupils who have speech and language difficulties achieve well because they are well supported through specific interventions such as specially designed reading programmes and clear individual education plans that are regularly reviewed.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Most pupils are enthusiastic about school and attend regularly. As one pupil said, 'We're having lots of fun learning'. However, a very small number of very persistent absentees lower the overall attendance rate, which is broadly satisfactory. The friendly relationships throughout the school ensure that pupils have good attitudes to learning and mainly behave well. Behaviour occasionally deteriorates as some pupils find it difficult to conform. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school and know that they can talk to an adult if they have any worries. They have an excellent understanding of what a healthy lifestyle is and how important it is to eat well and keep fit. This ensures they thoroughly enjoy the twice-weekly 'Fitness Fun' at lunchtime. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of the cultures of others and a respect for different traditions. They enjoy organising and preparing special events to raise money. This was seen in their 'Cake Stall', which was a very successful venture to raise money for their 'Huff and Puff' project. They are now enjoying using the playground equipment they were able to buy. Pupils' good progress in acquiring basic skills and the many opportunities they have to be active learners prepare them well for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good because teachers meticulously plan lessons and mainly ensure work is well matched to pupils' differing needs. Good relationships at all levels mean that pupils are very well supported in their learning. This promotes their self-confidence and encourages good behaviour and positive attitudes to work. Pupils say that teachers are very caring and help them with their work. A strength of the teaching is the way teachers ensure pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn and reinforce this well through checking their understanding either during or at the end of lessons. In some lessons, for example an excellent lesson in Year 2, effective questioning and a high level of challenge probe pupils' knowledge and understanding thoroughly so that they make very good progress. However, sometimes there is not enough challenge either through questioning or within the work and this hinders progress. Teaching assistants effectively contribute to pupils' learning through working with small groups in lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned to ensure continuity in pupils' learning. It fully meets the needs of all pupils, including those who have learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language. Special events such as Arts Week and Science and Technology Fortnight contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Links between subjects, through the use of topics, give pupils the opportunity to practise and improve their writing skills, for example in history. However, such links are not yet used to develop pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum. Good use is made of computers to enhance and consolidate pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy, as well as in information and communication technology. The curriculum is enriched by visits to local places of interest such as Queen Elizabeth Country Park and by visitors such as the Fire Challenge crew. These add interest and enjoyment to pupils' learning and contribute well to their safety and personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has a calm and friendly atmosphere with caring teachers and well-trained learning assistants who provide good pastoral care. Pupils' welfare and safety are given a high priority and all safeguarding requirements are fully in place. The school's systems for promoting good behaviour have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning and ensure any unsatisfactory behaviour is dealt with consistently. As well as providing thoughtful and well-considered support within the school, there are good links with outside agencies to ensure vulnerable pupils, including those who have moderate learning and behavioural difficulties, get effective support. This support often extends to families. For example, there is a home/school worker who provides courses for parents to enable them to be fully involved in their children's learning. Careful tracking of pupils' progress and rigorous assessment have enabled the school to target support for pupils who are not making the expected progress. A strength of the provision is the way pupils are involved in assessing how well they have done in lessons and use their individual targets to improve their work. Marking of pupils' work is supportive and identifies successful learning but does not always include the next steps to get better, which limits its impact as a tool for improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Self-evaluation is excellent. It is based on careful monitoring and a clear and precise analysis of all aspects of provision. This has enabled the overall good improvement since the last inspection and the very good improvements in tracking and target setting which were key issues. The school development plan is detailed and is the driving force for school improvement. It is shared with governors and regularly reviewed to ensure targets are met. Careful monitoring of teaching and learning has ensured its good quality. Subject leaders are fully committed to their roles and provide good leadership. However, although they monitor their subjects in a variety of ways, they do not monitor lessons and this limits their overall impact.

Governors are very supportive of the school and ensure they are well informed through their committees, visits and discussions with staff and pupils. However, they are not sufficiently rigorous in evaluating the work of the school to enable them to act fully as critical friends. The school has good links with parents, outside agencies and its local community of schools, which help to promote pupils' learning.

Community cohesion is promoted well through a clear focus on developing a sense of school identity, involvement with local schools and close links with parents. Links with the wider community are developing through the use of stories such as 'Katie Morag's Island' as a comparison with life in Trinidad.

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 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 ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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?	2
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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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 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

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	3
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 Weyford Infant School, Bordon, GU35 0EP

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school and would like to thank you for being so friendly and helpful. We were delighted to learn how much you enjoy school and hope you and your parents had great fun with the rest of your science activities.

Your school is a good school.

Here are some things the school does well.

- You make good progress because your teachers plan lessons well and senior leaders keep a very close check on how well you are doing.
- Your headteacher and all the staff are keen to ensure your school is a happy and safe place where you can work hard and do your best.
- You enjoy school, behave well and have an excellent knowledge of how to stay healthy.
- Your school takes good care of you so that you feel safe and secure.

Every school has something it could do better, so this is what I have asked your school to do to help you learn even more.

- Teachers need to ensure that you are always fully challenged in your learning through questions that make you think and work that fully tests your knowledge.
- Subject leaders need to check lessons across the school so that they know how well you are being taught.

Yours faithfully

Janet Sinclair

Lead Inspector