

Fleet Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116003
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326307
Inspection date	13 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Juliet Ward

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)	267
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	Mrs Louise Young
Headteacher	Mrs Christine Clayton
Date of previous school inspection	8 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Velmead Road Fleet GU52 7LQ
Telephone number	01252 613582
Fax number	01252 624253

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 issues:

- how well the school had improved the outdoor activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage to increase the level of challenge for all children.

The inspectors gathered evidence by jointly observing lessons with senior managers; holding discussions with staff, governors and pupils; scrutinising pupils' work; monitoring of parental questionnaires and the school's records of checks on the quality of its work; and tracking pupils' progress. 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

The provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage comprises three Reception classes. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is very small; presently no pupils are at early stages of speaking English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has been steadily rising and is slightly higher than that found nationally. The range of difficulties and/or disabilities are wide, and include specific learning and language, sight and physical difficulties. Four pupils have a statement of special educational needs, one statement is in the process of being issued, and a further statement is pending. The school has several awards, including Enhanced Healthy School status and Investors in People.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This outstanding school never rests on its laurels and is always looking for ways to enhance the pupils' enjoyment and love of learning. As a result, pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make outstanding progress and attain exceptionally high standards in reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology. They consistently apply what they have learned to their work in other subjects. The school promotes the 'Thinking Actively in a Social Context' (TASC) Framework, which encourages all pupils to take part in thinking through problems, to review what they already know, and to plan what they want to find out next. The school is highly successful in meeting its aim to be a school 'where every child can shine in a community that promotes lifelong learning and where children are equipped to take their place as responsible citizens'. As one parent wrote, 'Both my children have thrived intellectually, socially and emotionally.'

There are many reasons why pupils develop exceptional personal qualities and achieve so well, not least because of the consistently good and better quality of teaching, which meets the needs of all abilities and ages. Outstanding learning as a direct result of excellent, well-planned teaching was observed when Year 1 pupils worked together to partition numbers and record their successes. They competently defined and resolved the problems together, and collaborated well when assessing and recording their work. Despite several changes in staffing over the past three years, this high quality has been maintained. This is because the school has very robust, effective systems for inducting and training teachers new to the profession or to the school. No pupil is left behind, because individual support ensures that all are able to succeed. For example, when pupils enter the school with little spoken English, the leaders immediately identify individual programmes to support them. Those with learning difficulties, including speech and language problems, or behavioural difficulties, respond enthusiastically to the excellent support provided, and achieve exceptionally well. The positive response from parents was overwhelming. One asked to speak to inspectors, commenting that the school 'achieves an enviable balance between first-rate academic achievement and a happy, positive atmosphere, providing excellent care and support for both high-achieving children and those with learning difficulties'. Because of this, pupils feel safe and secure, and learn how to take risks and enjoy learning. Attendance is good, but could be better if a small minority of parents stopped taking family holidays during term time. The school has taken active steps to address this issue. Reflecting the effect of the Healthy School Award, the pupils have an excellent understanding of how to live healthy lives, enjoying the school's nutritious lunches, taking part in energetic exercise, gaining the school the Activemark, and participating in the wide range of extra-curricular activities.

The pupils are highly motivated learners, and their behaviour and attitudes are exemplary. The pupils' social, moral and cultural development is outstanding; their spiritual development is good. They work hard, take pleasure when others do well, and take their responsibility as members of the school council very seriously. They are very much involved in helping the school to improve, and to be a safe place; all safeguarding procedures are robust and stringently applied. One pupil told the inspectors that there had been a 'wobbly paving slab', and the school council had written a note in the site manager's log book, asking for it to be fixed. Through many excellent opportunities to take on responsibilities, pupils are inspired to think through how to solve problems. Teachers build on pupils' enthusiasms and make sure that basic skills receive due attention. The balance between creative and more formal learning has been

pivotal in enabling the school to build on its success. Teachers effectively match work to the pupils' abilities, and highly skilled support staff play a central role in working with different ability groups. Teachers are always on hand to offer guidance and encouragement, and have 'pupil conferences' to discuss the work with each individual, and to guide them on how to improve. Pupils themselves are very aware of their personal targets to help them improve, as are their parents. There is a real sense of learning partnership throughout the community.

The outstanding headteacher expects much from her staff, and provides the inspiration and resources for them to be successful. She is backed fully by high-quality governors and committed senior staff, and is held in high regard by the parents. She has built a team which has the pupils at the heart of the school's plans. One parent echoed the view of many when she wrote, 'I am very impressed with the leadership and management of the school.' All staff share a common vision and belief that only the best will do. This is a school that always looks to improve, which is clearly apparent in the ways that the curriculum has been made more imaginative while the school has maintained high standards. The pupils thrive here. High levels of enjoyment and achievement prepare the pupils well for the next stage of their education, and involve them in thinking about others less fortunate than themselves. The school has made local, national and global links with other schools through their work in the active local cluster of schools, and, recently, with schools in Manchester and Kenya. Joint work in setting up extended care in local schools provides parents and pupils with support before and after school; pupils are collected from Fleet Infant School to attend these sessions. One parent captured the essence of the school by writing, 'I could not wish for a better school for my child.'

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The youngest children get off to a flying start to their school life in the Reception classes. 'Our son loves coming to Fleet and has developed well since starting in Reception in September,' a very happy parent wrote. From the minute that they start, the children's personal development is of paramount importance. Sensitive, well-honed arrangements help them settle in quickly. Despite several members of staff in Reception being new to the school, strong teamwork based around thoughtful leadership means that all adults work together closely to match activities to the children's current stage of development. Consequently, they are completely absorbed and challenged, gaining much enjoyment from the rich, interesting environment provided both indoors and outdoors. The school has made great strides, improving the outdoor area since the last inspection. Opportunities for children to 'free-flow' between the indoor and outdoor environment are still somewhat limited. The children are able to make independent choices, but these are limited in the immediate outside area because space for use by all three classes is restricted. The teachers overcome these space restrictions by planning set times to use the wider outside area for 'activate' sessions. There is a careful balance between activities led by the adults and those initiated by the children. The children enter Reception with a very wide range of skills, and the trend over the past three years has varied enormously, from below average to average expectations. The present group of children are working at the levels expected for their ages. Children make excellent progress during their time in Reception, particularly in their social and emotional development. They consistently meet, and some exceed, the goals expected of them by the end of their Reception Year.

What the school should do to improve further

Although there are no substantial weaknesses, the inspectors agree with the school that in order to build on its success it should concentrate on:

- aiming to extend the opportunities for the children to make independent choices between the indoor and outdoor learning 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	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**

26 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fleet Infant School, Fleet, GU52 7LQ

Your school is an outstanding school with so many really special features.

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to your school. We felt lucky to be with you on Red Nose Day and see all your fabulous red costumes and face paints! We really enjoyed visiting all of your classes, looking at your work and talking with you. We are especially pleased that some of you came to talk to us about your work, and showed us lots of it.

All of the adults working with you care very much about you and want you to do well. Your headteacher leads and manages your school brilliantly. From Reception onwards, you make outstanding progress during your time at Fleet Infant School and are ready to manage even harder work when you move to the junior school. Your teachers make lessons exciting. Your behaviour is excellent, you listen very well in lessons, and you work hard. Your parents said how much they like the school. They told us, as did lots of you, how well you get on together and how helpful the teachers are. It was good to see how kind you are and how willingly you help each other.

We agree with your headteacher and teachers that the children in Reception can be given even more opportunities to choose tasks, both in the classroom and the outdoor learning area.

Please thank your parents for kindly sending in the letters and responses to the questionnaire. We had so many of them with lots to read about your school. These helped us to understand how well the school is doing. Your parents enjoy joining you in your learning. We agree with them that Fleet is a school where 'there is a real sense that everyone matters; Fleet Infants community is a brilliant place to grow and learn together'.

Yours faithfully

Juliet Ward

Lead Inspector