

Froxfield Church of England Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116289
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326356
Inspection date	15 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Susan Thomas-Pounce

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	33
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	Cpt Graham Meredith
Headteacher	Mrs Lynne Chester
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	High Cross Froxfield Petersfield GU32 1EG
Telephone number	01730 827251
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Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small school in the village of High Cross, near the market town of Petersfield. Most of the pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average. Their specific needs are Asperger's syndrome, Down's syndrome and cerebral palsy. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children in Reception. The headteacher has had several periods of extended absence owing to ill health. From June this year the leadership and management of the school are being supplemented by a headteacher of a neighbouring school. In recognition of its work, the school has received the Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark.

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, which is exceptionally popular with parents, many of whom live outside the area. Many comment on its friendly, welcoming atmosphere, its excellent and very approachable staff, and the wide variety of activities available to pupils. One parent wrote: 'This is a school which offers an exceptionally caring, safe and stimulating environment for children to thrive and learn. The ethos of the school has made learning a joy.' Parents enjoy active involvement in school life and successfully use the help they are given to support their children's learning through the reading diaries and the weekly newsletters. Outstanding leadership and management underpin the outstanding progress that pupils make, both personally and academically from their entry into Reception. The close links that have been forged with parents, the community, the church, and educational partners, has enabled the school to continue to provide a caring and supportive Christian environment in which children flourish. This has been especially important during the times when the headteacher has been absent owing to ill health.

When children enter Reception, their skills are in line with age-related expectations. In the current Year 2, skills in reading, writing and mathematics are considerably above the national average. This represents outstanding achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make comparable progress to their peers because of very well-matched provision. Pupils have highly positive attitudes to their learning and enjoy school life. This is reflected in their excellent behaviour and good attendance. Pupils have a very effective knowledge of healthy and safe lifestyles; they respect and love their teachers and teaching assistants. They have many opportunities to contribute to community life locally in May Day celebrations and church and village activities.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle to school life very quickly and happily. This is because of the excellent links made with parents prior to the children starting school, which support the excellent progress that they make. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is robust, with a strong focus on pupils' progress. Lessons are well planned and engage the pupils' attention at a number of different levels. Support staff provide outstanding support and challenge for small groups of pupils. All pupils are guided and supported exceptionally well. They are shown how to assess their work, and given very clear direction on how to make progress. Overall, the curriculum is outstanding because of the wealth of opportunities afforded by visitors, specialist teachers, school trips to the local area and the wide range of resources deployed to support learning. The school has been successful in gaining Healthy Schools Status, and the standard of food is clearly appreciated by the substantial proportion of pupils who take school lunch. Pupils' safety and welfare are kept under constant review to ensure that safeguarding systems are highly effective at all times. Parents were closely involved with the successful school Travel Plan, a result of which is a much safer new path to the school from the car park.

Leadership and management are outstanding; they are exemplary in the manner in which provision has been improved and the high standards maintained. The school has invested much time and effort in improving the teaching accommodation through the construction of a new classroom for Key Stage 1 pupils. One parent commented, 'The new classroom has made a hugely positive impact on all the pupils.' Another parent wrote that when looking to find a junior school, Froxfield is recognised as a school where children leave happy, confident, and

well in front of their peers academically. This excellent preparation for junior school is the result of outstanding teaching and learning, an exciting curriculum and a very high standard of care.

The promotion of community cohesion is good and is an area that the school is keen to improve. The strongest elements are the links with the local community and the development of the pupils' knowledge and understanding of global issues. Although the school has a good record of raising funds for charities outside the local area, the school recognises that not enough is being done to help pupils understand more about the cultural diversity of their own country.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children receive an excellent start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As one parent wrote, 'My son has learnt so much in the last year, he loves every minute of school and has grown to be a very confident child.' Most children start the Reception Year with a range of knowledge, skills and experience which is generally in line with that expected for this age. Due to very good teaching, they make excellent progress in the six areas of learning and the majority achieve and exceed, the expected levels by the time they are ready to enter Year 1. The very well-focused support given by well-informed learning support assistants ensures that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make very good progress. Progress in children's personal and social skills is particularly good due to well-established routines, excellent relationships with all staff and consistently high expectations. Children behave extremely well. They enjoy a broad range of interesting and engaging practical activities. The large covered area ensures that the outside space, which is well resourced and stimulating, can be used in any weather. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is very effective and very well managed by the two job-share teachers. They work closely together to ensure that there is continuity for the children in all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the focus on cultural diversity and the issues of community cohesion within the United Kingdom.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards are high and pupils' achievement is outstanding. Standards at the end of Year 2 are appreciably above average and progress is excellent. More-able pupils perform particularly well. In 2008, pupils performed slightly less well in mathematics than in the other subjects. Although standards in mathematics remained well above the national average, the school realised it could do better and, through carefully targeted support, the issue has been successfully addressed. Outstanding provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and this enables them to make rapid progress towards their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral and social development, is outstanding. Pupils' cultural development is good. Throughout the school, pupils are very considerate to one another and behaviour is outstanding. Pupils' enjoyment of their learning is also outstanding, which is reflected in above average attendance. They are

eager to talk about their work and take a pride in what they do. They develop a very good understanding of how to lead safe and healthy lifestyles, and of the importance of eating a healthy lunch and taking regular exercise. This is reflected in the school's award of the Activemark. In the playground and at lunchtimes, pupils play happily together and support each other. Pupils make a very positive contribution to the school and wider community. For example, pupils contribute to charities and the school council has improved the markings for playground games and developed the rules for behaviour in class and around the school. As one proudly said, 'We do lots for the school.' Pupils also support links with a parish church in Ghana. Pupils feel that all staff can be approached with ideas and that they will be listened to. Through visits, including visits to the local shops, the post office and the seaside, pupils are developing an excellent understanding of their own culture and of the local community. However, their understanding of the multicultural society in which they live is less well developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Lessons are stimulating and enjoyable, with many opportunities for practical activities. The recent work on water saw pupils investigating water systems in the school and making healthy drinks for their seaside outing. Lessons are well planned using assessment data and information and communication technology (ICT) is used imaginatively to support and extend learning. Explanations are always very clear and activities match ability so that all can succeed. Pupils review their own progress at the end of lessons and teachers' marking provides very helpful guidance to pupils on what is done well and what to improve. Pupils are extremely well managed and encouraged; consequently they give of their best and are highly motivated to learn. The use of specialist teachers for French, music and sports adds variety, and pupils respond exceptionally well to high expectations in all subjects. A prominent feature of lessons is the very effective way that support staff are trained to accelerate the learning of small groups of pupils. Parents play an important role in extending their children's learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum motivates pupils and promotes enjoyment of learning. There is a very strong focus on extending literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across different subjects. This promotes the achievement of high standards by the end of Year 2. Teachers effectively modify the curriculum to take account of pupils' aptitudes, so that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make equally strong progress. Personal, social, health and emotional development is very well promoted, so that pupils get along with one another very well and have a good understanding of healthy living. A wide range of educational visits and visitors adds enrichment and enjoyment to learning. Pupils say they really enjoy the work provided. There is a good emphasis on the use of the school's attractive grounds, as well as the wider area around the school. The use of ICT has improved considerably since the time of the previous inspection.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The exceptional pastoral care provided for pupils contributes appreciably to their enjoyment and their learning. The school carefully monitors the progress of all pupils so that it is able to identify those who need additional help and support. External agencies are very well used to support any vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Very effective arrangements are in place to ensure the smooth entry of pupils into the school. Procedures for safeguarding pupils and ensuring their health and safety are rigorously enforced. Staff ensure that pupils work in a safe, secure and clean environment. Parents are overwhelmingly appreciative of the good work of the staff and they greatly value the caring approach of the school towards their children. Excellent relationships with adults contribute to a warm, caring atmosphere.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The outstanding leadership of the well-respected headteacher has ensured that the school has maintained the very high standards noted in the previous inspection. The headteacher leads the school with dedication, commitment and skill. During the times she has been unwell, the school has regularly received first-class support from the School Improvement Partner and more recently from another local headteacher. This close partnership has enabled the headteacher, despite her absence, to improve the development of staff, strengthening their roles in monitoring and evaluating the quality of pupils' learning. The headteacher is building an effective team of key staff around her. Governance is excellent. Governors know the school extremely well and play an important part in shaping its development. Recently, they have overseen major alterations to the school and changes in staffing without any adverse effect on the pupils' learning. Recent improvements and those made since the previous inspection, together with the high quality of the current provision and the excellent progress being made by pupils, show that the school has an outstanding capacity to improve further. Links with parents, outside agencies and the local community have been promoted to enhance the provision on offer to pupils. By doing this, the school has made a good contribution to community cohesion, and plans are in place to enhance this further.

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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?	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**

03 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Froxfield Church of England Infant School, Petersfield, GU32 1EG

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed our visit and it was a pleasure talking to you. My colleague especially liked talking to the school council and joining you in assembly. I liked sharing lunch with you and hearing how much you enjoy your time in school. It is very clear that you and your parents greatly appreciate the work of the school. Overall, your school, is outstanding where you are doing exceptionally well with your work.

These are some of the strengths of the school.

- Your behaviour and your attitudes to your work are excellent.
- You really enjoy the wide range of activities that the school provides in lessons, through visits, and by joining with other schools for sport and singing.
- You know about how important it is to eat healthy food and take exercise.
- The staff know you very well and take very great care of you.
- Your headteacher and governors are doing a great job in making the learning fun and your time in school so enjoyable.

To make your school even better, I have asked the headteacher and staff to focus on one thing in particular:

- to help you learn more about other parts of the United Kingdom and the wider world.

Thank you again for helping us with our work. I know that you will all continue to work as hard as you do now and be a great credit to the school.

Best wishes to you all for the future.

Yours faithfully

Susan Thomas-Pounce

Lead Inspector