

Wincheap Foundation Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118867
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	326916
Inspection dates	14–15 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Eileen Chadwick

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	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	359
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	Alison Cogger
Headteacher	Clive Close
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hollow Lane Canterbury CT1 3SD
Telephone number	01227 464134

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	14–15 January 2009
Inspection number	326916

Fax number

01227 787360

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school serving a mixed area. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. The school has a specialist language unit with 26 pupils which caters for pupils with severe speech and language difficulties (The Unit). The overall proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average and a high proportion have statements of special educational need. These pupils' difficulties needs are mainly speech and language, physical, emotional and behavioural. Most pupils are of White British background. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children are in the Reception classes.

The seconded headteacher, in post since September 2008, is standing in for the substantive headteacher, who is also on secondment. The school has gained ArtsMark Gold, Active Mark, Healthy Schools, Investors in People and Eco Schools awards. The school provides a daily before-school breakfast club for pupils in Reception to Year 6. There is also a nursery in the same building as the school but this is separately managed.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school provides its pupils with a satisfactory education. High standards of care lead to pupils' good personal development and behaviour. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their creativity through the arts and pupils have strong opportunities to build their practical and sporting talents. Pupils in The Unit make good progress and are able to develop both their personal and academic abilities in a balanced way. There are excellent arrangements for them to integrate with pupils in mainstream classes. The headteacher provides very good leadership: he is building upon the school's strengths and, in a short space of time, has established important systems to move the school forward. Parents are very pleased with the changes being made and one expressed the views of many, saying, 'The new headteacher has clear and welcome ideas about how to take the school forward.'

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory but inconsistent. Many children begin school with low attainment and their good progress in Reception begins to raise standards. Progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory but standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 2. Good progress in Key Stage 2 raises standards to average in English, mathematics and science by Year 6 and pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future lives. New setting arrangements in mathematics are having a good impact on raising achievement for pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In literacy, the school's effectiveness in raising standards is satisfactory for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A significant minority of these pupils are boys whose low literacy standards restrict their access to the curriculum and enjoyment of school. Although most pupils attend regularly, these boys do not, which impairs their progress.

Teaching is good in Reception and Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 1, teachers do not always match work successfully to pupils' very wide range of attainment in the mixed-age classes and, on occasions, more capable and lower attaining pupils then underachieve. Also in this key stage, there is not always enough direct teaching of basic skills or links between reading and writing. Pupils of all ages often write enthusiastically for different purposes but weaker spelling and punctuation limits their writing attainment.

The curriculum is good with exceptional opportunities for extra-curricular activities. Systems for teaching reading have recently been strengthened but the school rightly acknowledges the need to step up the frequency of hearing pupils read in order to accelerate their progress, especially in Key Stage 1. Care, support and guidance of pupils are good. The breakfast club supports working parents well and gives pupils a good start to the school day. Assessment systems, recently strengthened, are rigorous. This has boosted the school's ability to evaluate itself and it has an accurate view of its strengths and which areas are in need of improvement.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is an accomplished leader who is empowering other leaders at all levels. Governors are supportive and are developing their abilities to challenge the school and monitor its progress. The rate of recent improvement shows the school has a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Close links with the pre-school and parents ensure that new children settle in well. Children arrive with a wide range of skills but, overall, their attainment on entry is well below that typical

for their age particularly in communication, language and literacy. Good teaching, with excellent opportunities for children to develop their speaking and personal skills, provides children with a very secure start. Well trained and qualified staff ensure that routines are well established so that children are exceptionally well cared for and kept very safe. By the time they transfer to Year 1, their attainment is still below average but this represents good progress, given their low starting point. The stimulating and colourful learning environment provides a good basis for improving skills especially in literacy and numeracy. Children enjoy school and choose activities independently during appropriate free play sessions, for example in the 'Noah's Ark' role play area. More formal sessions are of an equally good standard, for example, in promoting understanding of letter sounds and early reading and writing skills. Story starting points such as 'The Owl Babies' are used to promote an interest in nature. Children's creative and practical skills are strongly promoted through practical art sessions for designing and making. Lessons are planned well to meet children's needs. Assessment of children's progress has improved this year and is now thorough and accurate. The EYFS is well led and the staff are a close and effective team.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 by ensuring teaching meets the learning needs of all pupils.
- Accelerate the progress of lower attaining boys in literacy and improve their attendance and enjoyment of school.
- Implement more robust systems for teaching basic literacy skills, including reading, spelling and punctuation.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, make satisfactory but uneven progress across the school. Test results for Year 2 pupils improved last year, although they were still below average. For a number of years before this, exceptionally low standards meant pupils entered Key Stage 2 poorly prepared. Through good teaching in the juniors and much improved assessment and target setting, standards for the current Year 6 show a marked improvement from the below average test results in 2008. Writing standards are improving but spelling and punctuation are still weaker aspects. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve satisfactorily overall although those in The Unit do well because learning is well matched to their needs. In the main school, a number of boys have literacy learning difficulties. Whilst they now make satisfactory progress, their reading and writing standards are still low due to past underachievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The great majority of pupils show respect and consideration for others, settle well to their lessons, listen attentively and concentrate well. Parents, staff and governors are pleased with recent improvements in pupils' behaviour although there are still occasional instances of boisterous behaviour at playtimes. The school takes a strong stance on punctuality and

attendance. It works very closely with the education welfare officer to tackle any issues. Most pupils really enjoy school and are proud to attend, though a small group of pupils, mainly boys, do not enjoy school so much and attend irregularly. Pupils co-operate well in class and relationships are good. They understand how to stay safe and the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They appreciate the nutritious school lunches and the wide range of sporting activities that are on offer. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. They have good awareness of life in multicultural Britain, of people's different racial backgrounds and religious beliefs. They make a good contribution to the school and wider community, for example through the very active school council.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and form good relationships with them. Learning is interesting and often based on practical experiences. Planning and teaching methods reflect the needs of individuals well in the EYFS, Key Stage 2 and The Unit, where teaching is consistently good. However, in the mixed-age classes in Key Stage 1, teachers have difficulty in meeting the wide range of pupils' learning needs and there is not always enough direct teaching of basic skills or links between reading and writing. The high levels of skills of specialist teachers in music and art have been used very well to ensure that pupils do well in these subjects. Assessment is regular and thorough although there are instances when literacy work is planned for pupils' age rather than building on pupils' previous skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and interesting. Very rich experiences in music and art are reflected in the high quality displays and in musical performance. Liaison is extremely good with other schools and very high quality enrichment brings the curriculum alive. After-school clubs and activities greatly enhance pupils' personal development. Shortcomings in the teaching of literacy have begun to be addressed through new systems for teaching phonics, guided reading and improved resources. However, in Key Stage 1, the books for reading at home do not rigorously promote the steady build up of reading skills. The school also acknowledges that arrangements for hearing pupils read vary and that there is a need to step up the frequency. The breakfast club has an interesting and well organised range of activities and settles pupils for the day ahead.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There is a high level of personal support for pupils. Child protection procedures and arrangements for safeguarding are rigorous and well understood by staff. The school works effectively with outside agencies to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are excellent arrangements for integrating pupils from The Unit with the rest of the school so they can enjoy the benefits of the mainstream classes. Systems for tracking pupils' progress, recently improved, are very thorough. School leaders now use these meticulously for evaluating pupils' progress and the impact of provision on progress. Teachers too are becoming more skilled at analysing the impact of their provision on pupils' achievement. However, in Key Stage 1, teachers

do not use assessment so well to consistently match pupils' work to their needs. Pupils' individual target-setting has been much improved recently. Pupils are clear about their targets and are helped to evaluate how well they are doing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

When the headteacher took up post, he quickly identified improvement areas. The new leadership structure is well thought through and empowering all leaders to play their full part in raising achievement. Communications have improved and staff and parents are pleased with the changes. In pinpointing pockets of underachievement, school leaders quickly developed more robust tracking so that pupils have challenging targets that can be accurately evaluated. The school rightly recognises that work is required to develop stronger provision for pupils with literacy difficulties and for pupils in Key Stage 1. Governors provide satisfactory leadership and are becoming more involved in evaluating this progress and determining ways forward. They have earmarked a budget that effectively supports the implementation of the well conceived school improvement plan. Community cohesion is promoted well. The school strives to reach out to all different groups and is particularly effective with the local community.

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?	3
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?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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**

15 January 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Wincheap Foundation Primary School, Canterbury CT1 3SD

I am writing to tell you how much we enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helping us with the inspection. Your views are important as you are the school's customers. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school.

First, you need to know your school gives you a satisfactory education and school staff intend to make this better. Here are some good things about your school.

- Those of you in Reception and in the Language Unit make good progress.
- Those of you in Key Stage 2 make good progress in English and mathematics.
- You behave well and take on responsibilities willingly and carry them out properly.
- You have excellent learning opportunities in art, music and after-school clubs.
- The teachers and staff take good care of you in school.
- You are serious about the importance of eating healthily and taking physical exercise.
- Your headteacher leads your school very well and the governors and staff are keen to make it better.

Here are some things we are asking the school to do.

- Help those of you in Year 2 to reach higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics by making sure your work is never too hard or easy.
- Make sure you have better chances for reading in Key Stage 1 and better help with your spelling and punctuation.
- Give more help to those boys who have difficulties with their reading and writing so they can do better and enjoy school more and also that everybody attends school regularly.

I hope you will continue to try hard in all you do so that your work continues to improve.

Yours faithfully

Eileen Chadwick Lead inspector