

Ewell Grove Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124955
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	328249
Inspection date	21 January 2009
Reporting inspector	David Marshall

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)	245
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 Gill Jowett
Headteacher	Mrs Kate Keane
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	West Street Ewell Epsom KT17 1UZ

Age group	3–7
Inspection date	21 January 2009
Inspection number	328249

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and the following areas:

- the current standards, and how successful the strategic focus on writing has been in raising achievement
- the strengths in pupils' personal development and well-being
- how effectively the use of assessment in the foundation subjects has been developed and used across the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1
- the developments since the last inspection in the school's self-evaluation and aspects of leadership and management.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations; work in books; the analysis of test results; teachers' assessments and records of pupils' performance; 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

Ewell Grove is a larger than average, two and a half form entry nursery and infant school. It sits within the heart of a village and has no natural feeder school for Key Stage 2. The pupils predominantly come from the West Ewell and Ewell Wards and from a range of diverse family backgrounds. The school has an average number of pupils eligible for free school meals. There is a slightly higher than average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and an average proportion of pupils whose first language is not English. There is a lower than average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or with a statement of special needs. Over the past three years - that is, since the last inspection - the school has achieved the Healthy School, Investors in People and Activemark awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Ewell Grove provides an outstanding education for its pupils. The school is an extremely caring environment, where the excellent welfare for each pupil ensures their outstanding academic and personal development. Inspection evidence fully endorses the parents' overwhelmingly positive views of the school and, in particular, the quality of the opportunities given to each pupil. One parent summed up the views of many by writing: 'We have been very impressed with all aspects of the school, particularly the dedication and enthusiasm of the teachers, which definitely inspires the children to be the best they can be. Great attention is given to the individual, and the school atmosphere is inclusive, welcoming and nurturing.'

Throughout the school, pupils achieve extremely well. Children enter the school with skills and understanding that vary but are broadly in line with those expected for their age. By the time they leave, standards are consistently high in reading and mathematics, and well above average in writing. In the 2008 national assessments, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in reading and mathematics was very high. School data show that its focus in the last year on writing, and its strong emphasis on providing a greater range of stimulating activities, has been very successful in raising these standards even higher, to be in line with those achieved in other subjects.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. The atmosphere for learning created by the whole staff is supportive and caring. As one parent said, 'An excellent school in my opinion. All staff are very approachable and go the extra mile to care for the children.' Staff are vigilant to pupils' needs, enabling them all to learn and play in a safe and secure learning environment. Thanks to the school's excellent systems, pupils' attendance rates have improved. The school has worked hard to make parents aware of the impact of absences on their children's progress. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of pupils' development are outstanding. The delight they showed in the successes of others in the celebration assembly was a joy to see. Pupils show very caring attitudes to each other and the environment. They learn to respect children from different backgrounds, and have an excellent understanding of healthy living and keeping safe. The school's relationships with parents are excellent, and the staff have a strong commitment to partnership with them. This contributes very well to the outstanding pastoral care that the school shows for its pupils. In the questionnaire returns for the inspection, there were concerns from a very small minority of parents about the school playground and the occasional accidents caused by the rough surface. Parents should be reassured that there are already plans in place to remedy this situation.

There is outstanding provision in the EYFS, where teachers plan stimulating and challenging activities for the children. Children thoroughly enjoy all their days in school, and this provides them with an excellent start to their education. Throughout the rest of the school, teaching and learning are often outstanding. Lessons are very detailed, making sure that all pupils enjoy learning. The exceptional planning means that the goals of developing pupils' personal qualities of enquiry, adaptability and thoughtfulness are paramount in every lesson.

The excellent progress that pupils make is enabled by the careful use of the outstanding systems for checking on their progress. It is significant that the pupils themselves know their targets and how best they can improve. Teachers assess pupils' progress exceptionally well and make excellent use of this information when planning future work. The information collected about pupils is used particularly well to ensure that the least-able and most-vulnerable pupils make

outstanding progress. This is achieved by providing excellent support from the very experienced teaching assistants wherever it is needed.

The rich curriculum covers all subjects very well, and is enhanced by an extensive range of additional activities. The staff are constantly looking for ways to engage pupils and, in particular, to enhance their thinking skills. It was remarkable to be able to discuss the outcomes of lunar exploration, the relative sizes of family members and what makes an effective parachute, with enthusiastic Year 1 and Year 2 pupils.

Leadership and management at all levels are exceptional, and this has a considerable impact on pupils' excellent progress. Teamwork is of the highest quality and everyone plays a valuable part in moving the school forward. The very experienced headteacher's leadership is excellent. As one parent observed when referring to the headteacher, '...outstanding headteacher, who has clear authority and respect of children and staff.' The role of the subject leaders has been enhanced, and they make a significant contribution to the school. They all paid tribute to how the headteacher had enabled them to develop professionally and 'flourish as well as the children'. As a result of very detailed work since the last inspection, there is a clear understanding of strengths of the school and areas that need more development. The school's self-evaluation is extremely effective. The school recognises that its task now is to sustain the high levels of achievement it has reached. The excellent school improvement plan provides very clear guidance on relevant issues for raising standards, and takes into consideration support and initiatives from all sources.

Governors have an excellent understanding of their strategic role in the school's development, and have very good systems for checking on its effectiveness and for holding the leaders to account. As a result, they have very clear understanding of what is working well, what can improve, and how it can be achieved. It is this zealous attention to detail regarding what each pupil wants and needs, shared by all involved, which shows the school's outstanding capacity to continue to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children in the EYFS make an excellent start to their education. From an average starting point they make outstanding progress in all areas of learning, so that most exceed the goals expected for their age. This represents outstanding achievement. Children make particularly good progress in their personal development, because well-established routines are in place to ensure that children and their parents are introduced to the Nursery and Reception classes in a systematic way. Welcome and coffee mornings are held so that children get used to the building, and they quickly settle to school life. As one parent wrote, 'The Nursery does an absolutely fabulous job of preparing the children for 'big school'.' The basic skills that children need are taught very effectively, with the excellent curriculum supported extremely well by visitors coming into school, and visits into the local area and beyond. Children in the Nursery were particularly excited about the police car that visited the school, and some members of the school council remember when they visited a farm in the Reception class.

Excellent leadership and management have resulted in a strong staff team which places the care and education of the children as its top priority. All activities are well planned and designed to meet the needs of all children. They are based on thorough assessments and a drive to identify what children need to do next in their learning. Those who are new to learning English are very well supported so that they can join in with all activities. There is a very good balance

of activities that children choose for themselves and those that adults lead. This leads to children being well prepared for the next stage of their education, having the skills and confidence they need to succeed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Work to sustain the high quality of provision.
- Bring to fruition plans to repair the surface of the school playground.

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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**

04 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ewell Grove Infant and Nursery School, Epsom, KT17 1UZ

Thank you for making us welcome in your school and talking to us about your feelings, ambitions and thoughts. It was a delight to meet you and we really enjoyed looking at your work and joining in your lessons.

We are glad to tell you that your school is outstanding and provides you with a really good start to your education. We were particularly pleased with these things:

- your headteacher and staff do a super job in organising the school and looking after you
- you all really enjoy being in school
- you are all making excellent progress with your work
- you behave very well, work hard and listen carefully to your teachers - all of this helps you to succeed
- all the adults in the school look after you very carefully; they always make sure that you get help if you need it.

We agree with one or two of your parents about the playground surface, and we have asked the headteacher and governors to carry out their plans to make it better in order to avoid accidents happening.

Together, the staff have done a lot to make the school even better than before. Now that it is so excellent, we have asked them to make sure that they keep things this good in the future. In turn, you can help by listening carefully and taking note of what your teachers say. Then you will all continue to make very good progress in your learning.

Finally, we would like to thank you once again for all your help. We wish you well in the future.

Yours faithfully

David Marshall

Lead Inspector