

Knaphill School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125000
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	328259
Inspection date	10 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Selwyn Ward

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	314
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sandra Bedford
Headteacher	Mr Kevin Davies
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2005
School address	High Street Knaphill Woking GU21 2QH
Telephone number	01483 888 899
Fax number	01483 472 062

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and particularly investigated:

- the progress that pupils are making, particularly in mathematics
- how effective teaching and the curriculum are in ensuring pupils of all abilities achieve as well as they can
- the impact of school leaders' monitoring and evaluation.

The inspector met with pupils, some staff and governors. Parts of lessons were observed, parents' questionnaires and a sample of pupils' work were examined and school information, including its self-evaluation, was scrutinised. The inspector 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 the report.

Description of the school

This school is larger than average. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with small numbers coming from a wide range of different minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Knaphill is part of a loose confederation with other local schools. The headteacher was appointed in September 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Knaphill is a good school. The headteacher, leadership team and governors have an accurate view of the school's many strengths. The school's capacity for improvement is good because school leaders' self-evaluation is accurate and they have a clear picture of where improvements can be made to further raise the above-average standards that the pupils attain. For example, measures taken over recent years to boost pupils' performance in writing have been effective. The profile of writing in the school has been raised and pupils are given plenty of opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills. School leaders have recognised the need to now give similar priority to boosting performance in mathematics, where standards are not quite as high as they have been in English and science. Marking, targets and stimulating displays in each of the classrooms all help to promote literacy and ways for pupils to improve their writing. These are much less in evidence in mathematics.

The standards that pupils attain represent good achievement in relation to their starting points, which are assessed shortly after they join the school in Year 3. They are in line with those that might be expected in relation to the high standards at which pupils were assessed in Year 2 in their previous school. Able and middle-attaining pupils do well, making steady progress in their work. It is the less-able pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, whose progress is sometimes slower. The headteacher has correctly identified that the way in which the timetable is organised has been a contributory factor here. Because literacy and numeracy sessions in different year groups overlap, support staff who move between pupils in different year groups are often only able to assist each of the pupils for part of a lesson.

In this well-run school, leaders' monitoring has helped to ensure good teaching and learning. Leaders' observations of lessons identify what works best, as well as picking out ways in which pupils' learning can be accelerated. This has helped to increase the pace of lessons and to give pupils greater involvement in assessing their own and each other's work. Opportunities are sometimes missed, however, to use the session at the end of each lesson to reinforce what has been learnt. Pupils are asked to identify, for example, whether each other's work meets the success criteria for the lesson. However, they are not routinely pressed to exemplify this to illustrate how the success criteria have been met. Teachers get on very well with their pupils and this helps to motivate them to concentrate hard and do their best. The school has had particular success in turning its pupils into enthusiastic learners, who listen well to their teacher and each other, and who are eager to answer questions and join in. The pupils especially appreciate the way their teachers help prepare them for the future. As one Year 5 boy explained, 'They teach you lots of valuable lessons that will help you in life.' The school's Artsmark and Activemark awards attest to the breadth of a curriculum which, in the words of the pupils, 'gives us fun things to do in lessons'. The good curriculum is enriched through productive links with other schools and a very good range of clubs that cater for an unusually wide range of interests.

Pupils' great enjoyment of school is almost certainly a factor contributing to pupils' excellent attendance rate. The good systems for pupils' care, guidance and support ensure that pupils feel safe and learn well how to keep safe. Among the changes introduced by the new headteacher were arrangements to tighten security at the school. These have proved controversial with parents, who express divided views on the matter. Some say, 'It is good to see the changes being made', but a significant minority of parents voice concerns that the entry system amounts

to 'putting the school in lock down'. The new security measures, preventing unauthorised access to the buildings, are not dissimilar to those found in other schools.

Pupils' personal development is good. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils voice confidence that, although there are occasions when others act unkindly, problems and disagreements are sorted out by staff quickly and effectively. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to eat healthy food and take regular exercise. In a recent survey at the school, almost 50 times as many said that, given the choice, they would rather walk or cycle to school than be delivered in a stretch limo! Pupils respond with typical enthusiasm to the opportunities that they have to take responsibilities within the school community. The school council, newly established this year, can already point to several successes. The school's Woodland Rangers and the Eco Team are also proud of their achievements. The announcement that their efforts had earned the school an Eco award came in the same week as the inspection. The school's link-up with the local residents' association has involved pupils in a local environmental clean-up campaign. Visits to various different churches, the local mosque and a synagogue have all contributed to raising pupils' awareness of and understanding about the variety of cultures and beliefs in modern Britain. The school has also extended pupils' horizons to look to the wider world beyond, earning Knaphill an International Award. Governors take a justifiable pride in the good contribution that the school makes through its promotion of community cohesion.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make more effective use of displays, marking and pupils' individual targets in mathematics to help pupils to accelerate their progress in this subject.
- Implement plans to revise the timetable to increase the continuity of support for those pupils who need extra help with their learning.
- Make fuller use of plenary sessions at the end of lessons to reinforce what has been learnt.

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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?	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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	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	1
The attendance of learners	1
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	2
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	2
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**

19 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Knaphill School, Woking, GU21 2QH

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to visit. Several of you told me that you thought Knaphill is a good school, and you are right. It is. You achieve well and attain above-average standards at the end of Year 6 that prepare you well for when you move on to secondary school. A lot of work has been done to help boost your writing skills. There are great displays in every class that help you to improve your writing, and you also get super help in this through marking and the individual targets in your diaries. Standards are not quite as high in mathematics as they are in English and science. I have asked the school to match in mathematics what they have done in writing through marking, targets and displays to help you to further accelerate your learning in this subject. You can help by doing your very best to achieve all your targets.

I was pleased to see how well-behaved you are and how well you get on with each other. This helps to make Knaphill a happy, friendly place to be. I was particularly impressed by your excellent attendance and how enthusiastic you all are to learn and do well. You are helped to succeed by the good teaching in your well-run school. It was good to see how fully involved you all are in lessons and in assessing your own and each other's work. Teachers often ask you to tell them whether you think the success criteria for the lesson have been met, but I have asked them to press you more to illustrate how the criteria have been met. That will help to emphasise for you what exactly you have learnt.

Some of you who need extra help with your learning do not make quite such good progress as others. Your headteacher has identified that the way the timetable is organised with, for example, literacy lessons in one year group starting while those in another year group are still running, limits the opportunity for teaching assistants to give support for the whole of a lesson. I have asked the school to move ahead with their plans to change this so that those of you who need it can benefit from more support.

The school takes good care of you, which is another reason why you feel happy and safe at Knaphill. It also gives you lots of interesting things to do. You are lucky to have so many clubs that cover such a wide range of interests. Well done on the achievements of the school council and the success of the Eco Team in winning the school its new Eco award.

Yours faithfully

Selwyn Ward

Lead Inspector