

Reigate Priory Community Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125070
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	328278
Inspection date	5 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter Thrussell

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)	580
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Pamela Hutchinson
Headteacher	Mr Noel Lellman
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2006
School address	Bell Street Reigate RH2 7RL
Telephone number	01737 245065
Fax number	01737 221268

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the impact of leadership and management on ensuring the good progress of all pupils
- teachers' use of assessment in planning and guiding pupils in their learning.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's documents. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with children, governors, other leaders and staff also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but 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 this report.

Description of the school

Reigate Priory is a very large junior school. It is housed in an 800-year-old Grade 1 listed building, surrounded by a huge and very beautiful park, giving it a unique character. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average. The largest group are those with moderate learning needs. The school has a number of awards including the International School, Healthy School and Activemark awards. There is an after school club, T-Club-6, which is run independently of the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Reigate Priory is an outstanding school. The headteacher provides committed and visionary leadership and is extremely well supported by his deputy headteacher, the senior leadership team, governing body and staff. Together they ensure pupils' outstanding progress in both their academic and personal development. Excellent links with parents, the community, other schools and outside agencies contribute to pupils' learning and the extremely high level of care and support provided by the school. Many parents feel privileged to be able to send their children to the school. One commented, 'I believe it is a very unique school, which gives the children not only an excellent academic education, but also an incredible sense of self-worth and confidence.'

Pupils greatly enjoy all aspects of school life, as shown in their eagerness to attend school, the popularity of the many school clubs and the excellent progress they make. They are especially proud of the historic school building and the surrounding parkland, which, along with an extremely well-enriched curriculum, provide many exciting and memorable learning opportunities. Pupils value the friendships they make, commenting that, 'We are really kind to each other.' They know that if they have any concerns an adult is always on hand to listen to them. Although very large in size, pupils view the school as 'one happy family'. They are proud of the considerable contribution they make to the school community and that they can record their own self-evaluation, which they expect the school to act on. All Year 6 pupils have specific responsibilities, such as being monitors or going on 'Fire Watch' patrol. The school council have organised 'Fruity Fridays', buying and selling fruit to promote healthy eating, but definitely 'not to make a profit'. Pupils value the many sporting opportunities on offer and are rightly proud of their many successes in local tournaments. They have an excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, which is recognised in national awards. Excellent behaviour and very positive attitudes contribute considerably to the progress pupils make in their learning and their preparation for life.

Standards on entry to Year 3 are above average. Pupils make excellent progress throughout the school towards the very challenging targets set for them. Overall, by the end of Year 6 they attain very high standards in English, mathematics and science, with particularly high proportions reaching higher-than-expected levels. In 2007 standards were especially high, due to extra time and resources allocated to boost pupils' progress in Year 6. The school evaluated this approach and judged that it was at the expense of providing pupils with broader and more creative learning experiences. Consequently, a highly creative curriculum, the 'creative learning journey', has been planned and successfully introduced. This provides opportunities for pupils to use and develop their different skills through interesting and relevant topics, to work independently and to follow their own lines of enquiry. Pupils comment on how much they enjoy this approach and the opportunity to draw on their different skills, such as information and communication technology, writing and design technology. As part of a strong drive to raise writing standards, this approach has had an especially positive impact. Opportunities to write for a purpose, such as articles for newsletters and sports reports, have helped to raise the profile of writing, especially among more-able boys, and to raise achievement and standards. Teachers look very carefully at pupils' writing and have become very skilled in assessing individual progress and identifying the next steps in learning for each pupil, so ensuring consistently good progress for all. They are keen to bring about similar improvements to the already good procedures for assessing progress in reading and mathematics.

This high level of achievement and progress results from excellent teaching and positive encouragement for parents to be involved in their children's learning. Staff have an excellent rapport with pupils and have very high expectations of them. Lessons are very well planned, with clear indications of what pupils are expected to achieve. These are shared with pupils, so that they know what is expected of them and have a means of evaluating how well they have done. Along with individual targets to aim for and constructive comments in marking, this shows that pupils are very well guided in their learning. Learning support assistants provide very effective support, particularly when working with lower-attaining pupils, including those with learning difficulties. This enables these pupils to make similar progress to others. The school very closely monitors the quality of teaching and learning, holding teachers accountable for the progress pupils make. This helps to ensure that pupils make the progress expected of them.

The school is extremely accurate in its self-evaluation, which is undertaken by all staff and governors. This helps the school to identify areas for improvement, such as the creative curriculum and writing standards, and to plan appropriate action. The school does much to promote pupils' understanding and respect of communities both locally and internationally, as recognised in a national award. Exchanges with a German school are a particular highlight. An evaluation has been made of the impact of this provision on community cohesion, showing that more is to be done to develop links with communities beyond the immediate area. The school is addressing this. Given the quality of its self-evaluation, improvement since the last inspection, and strong determination to strive for even greater excellence, the school has an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Apply teachers' improved skills in assessing progress in writing to reading and mathematics.

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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

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	1
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**

15 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Reigate Priory Community Junior School, Reigate, RH2 7RL

I am writing to let you know what I found when I visited your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection. I spoke with some of you during my visit and you were interesting to talk to, extremely polite and helpful. You spoke very enthusiastically about enjoying school and all of the things you take part in. Reigate Priory is an outstanding school.

I liked these things the most.

- You enjoy school, behave extremely well and want to do your best.
- The school makes sure that you are safe and extremely well looked after. It really is one big, happy family.
- You have lots of exciting things to do. I was very impressed with the school building and grounds and all that you are learning from them.
- You know the importance of eating the right things and staying fit and healthy.
- You are very keen to take on responsibilities and to suggest how the school could be even better.
- The staff are extremely welcoming to your parents and encourage them to support you in all that you do in school.
- Your headteacher, governors and staff are doing an excellent job.

I have asked the school to work particularly on the following thing.

- Teachers look very carefully at how well each one of you is doing in your writing. This ensures that what they plan for you to do next is just right for each one of you and will help you all to do even better. I am asking them to use a similar approach to assist with your reading and mathematics. This will help you all to do your very best in these subjects. You can help by continuing to enjoy school and working as hard as possible.

I did enjoy visiting your school and watching you learn.

Yours faithfully

Peter Thrussell

Lead Inspector