

Clarendon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125088
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	328284
Inspection date	26 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Nick Butt

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	208
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	Mr Graham Coldman
Headteacher	Mrs Tanya Dakin
Date of previous school inspection	11 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Knapp Road Ashford TW15 2HZ
Telephone number	01784 253 379
Fax number	01784 421 745

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. They evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- how the school is raising attainment in mathematics
- the influence that leaders are having on outcomes for pupils.

The inspectors gathered evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and parents' questionnaires. Discussions with staff, governors and pupils also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail.

Description of the school

This average-sized school offers Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the Reception class. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with others from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. A small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average, including those with statements of educational needs. Needs include speech and language and moderate learning difficulties. The school is designated as a children's centre, and the facilities opened in February 2009. Private providers run an after-school club and a pre-school facility on the school site. These were subject to a separate inspection. Among other awards, the school has the Activemark and the Foundation International Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Clarendon Primary is a good school. It has many strengths, particularly in the way it cares for all its pupils. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide dynamic leadership, with a clear vision for 'Team Clarendon', which highlights the pursuit of excellence. This is embraced by the whole school community. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive, with the vast majority expressing their great appreciation of everything the staff do for their children. One, speaking for most, said, 'Everyone is made to feel special and valued whatever their ability.' There has been good progress since the last inspection, and the school's capacity to improve further is good.

Pupils join the Reception class with a wide range of skills and abilities that are below those typically found, especially in speech and communication and in personal and social development. By the end of Year 6, an above-average proportion of pupils achieve well and attain the expected Level 4 in English, mathematics and science. A smaller proportion attain the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics. Overall standards are broadly average in writing and mathematics and above average in reading and science. Standards have been rising in mathematics as a result of a renewed emphasis on pupils using and applying their skills through investigative work. They now need to develop their skills in mental mathematics to move their learning on further. Pupils make good progress from their starting points, including the many pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This is because the teaching is good and the well-planned curriculum includes all pupils, which is excellently enriched by a host of clubs and exciting visits and visitors.

There are very good relationships between adults and pupils in all classes and pupils are well motivated. Teachers make clear what pupils are to learn and set out the steps that will enable them to succeed in the lesson. They provide good opportunities for pupils to talk about what they are doing and to discuss ideas as a class, in groups and with a partner. This emphasis on speaking and listening helps pupils to become articulate and confident by the time they leave Year 6, which prepares them well for secondary school. Lessons are well planned and match work to the abilities of the pupils, ensuring that most pupils make good progress. However, there are not enough opportunities for higher-attaining pupils, in particular, to extend their writing across a range of subjects, because of too much reliance on worksheets. Occasionally, the pace of learning slows if pupils are not given enough time to record their work or spend too long listening to the teacher.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. They have a good understanding about different cultures and traditions, celebrating them in special themed days, such as World Day. They have established links with a school on the Maldives Islands in the Indian Ocean. Behaviour is good and is managed well by adults. Attendance has improved as a result of the school's rigorous approach to reducing absence and is now in line with the national average. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy, having achieved the Healthy School Award. They take plenty of exercise, with a choice of some 17 sports clubs, and the older pupils go sailing in the summer. The school council was involved in writing the school's anti-bullying policy, and pupils say they feel safe at school. They show each other respect and enjoy coming to school. One pupil said, 'Everyone fits into this school so nicely - you're part of the family even if you're different.' Pupils take responsibility in a variety of ways, as eco-warriors, prefects, mentors and sports leaders. They support their local community through litter picking, their choir giving concerts and their

participation in events such as Spelthorne in Bloom. While standards are broadly average, pupils develop enterprise skills through class competitions and fund-raising.

The good curriculum contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of school and their positive personal development and well-being. In particular, the excellent opportunities for enrichment add excitement and interest to the curriculum. Themed weeks such as Every Child Matters Week, with a focus on a different aspect each day, help pupils to understand healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe. Visitors include the local MP, circus performers, owls and the mayor. Pupils go on visits to places of interest in London and further afield, including the Golden Hinde and Hampton Court and residential trips to Shropshire and Surrey. The many clubs include street dancing, bug hunting and a computer club run by Year 6 pupils. The curriculum is well structured to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, including those with speech and language difficulties. There is good provision for numeracy and literacy, which enables pupils to achieve well. The curriculum is being developed to form links across subjects, with some innovative work in information and communication technology. Year 6 pupils were making an animation film using a model village to help the Reception children develop their number skills. More could be made of extended writing in subjects such as history and geography, to challenge the more able pupils in particular.

The impact of leadership and management is good, particularly in establishing the caring ethos that gives the school its distinctive character, where all pupils are valued as individuals and made to feel important. Effective tracking of pupils' progress shows leaders where intervention is needed and enables them to hold teachers to account. Subject leaders have a clear understanding of their areas of responsibility and record their monitoring in a consistent way. The school's self-evaluation is too generous and is not fully underpinned by searching reflection on the school's work, or honed by external challenge. For example, while there is regular monitoring of teaching and learning, there is insufficient emphasis on clear written feedback about what could be improved. The correct priorities for improvement have been identified in strategic plans, and governors are involved well in evaluating the effectiveness of their implementation. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, with effective support from teaching assistants enabling pupils to reach their individual targets. Care, guidance and support are outstanding, because there is excellent support for individual pupils and very strong links with outside agencies, while the new children's centre enables the school to reach out very effectively to its local community. Pupils are given good guidance about how to improve their work and know the next steps in their learning. The school promotes community cohesion well, particularly in understanding its local context and in forging links overseas. It has more work to do in helping pupils to understand about other communities in the United Kingdom.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Reception class from starting points below those typically found, although standards in writing are a little below average by the time they enter Year 1. While children are taught early literacy skills well, they do not always have enough opportunities to practise these through independent learning. The teaching is good and focuses on developing early basic skills. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Assessment is particularly strong, with adults knowing the children very well, and establishing good links with parents. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well, with a committed team of adults ensuring that the learning environment is a safe and caring one, where children

can thrive. There is a spacious outdoor area, but it lacks challenging large apparatus for physical development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards, particularly at the higher levels, in writing and mathematics, by:
 - increasing opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum
 - improving pupils' skills in mental mathematics.
- Sharpen monitoring to ensure evaluation of the provision is always rigorous.

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	2

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	2
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	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?	1

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	3
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

09 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Clarendon Primary School, Ashford, TW15 2HZ

Thank you for making us so welcome at your school. Yours is a good school. Here are some of its particular strengths.

- You make good progress in your studies, particularly in reading and science.
- Your behaviour is good and you look after one another well.
- You make a valuable contribution to the school and local community.
- There are plenty of clubs and trips for you to enjoy.
- The school cares for you extremely well, especially if you are facing difficulties.
- The school is led and managed well.

Standards are not quite so good in writing and mathematics, and we have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to write at length in subjects such as history and geography. We have also asked them to help you develop your skills in mental mathematics further. When they check on how things are going, we have asked them to do this really carefully, so that they know exactly how successful the school is. We are sure they would value your thoughts on what is working well and on anything that could be further improved.

Thank you again for your help.

Our very best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Nick Butt

Lead Inspector