

Knowle Park Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125092
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	328286
Inspection date	22 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Pye

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)	237
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 Sara Harding
Headteacher	Mrs Maggie Robertson
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Knowle Green Staines TW18 1AJ
Telephone number	01784 457 933
Fax number	01784 449 471

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the impact of the school's work on improving pupils' achievement and standards, particularly with reference to boys' writing, to what extent pupils know how to improve their work, and how well the Early Years Foundation Stage is addressing the need to promote social and language skills.

Evidence was gathered from discussions with staff, pupils and governors, school documentation and pupils' work were examined, and lessons observed and visited. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection 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 in this report.

Description of the school

This average-sized infant school has below the expected numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above the expected amount, and there are high numbers of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. These pupils have predominantly moderate learning difficulties. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two Reception classes and the Nursery. Not all children attending the Nursery go on to join the school. There is a daily and well-attended on-site Breakfast Club. The school has achieved the Healthy School Award and Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides pupils with a good standard of education. It has outstanding aspects, such as the personal development and care, support and guidance of pupils. They gain great enjoyment from the outstanding curriculum. Parents think highly of the school. One spoke on behalf of the vast majority when writing, 'Knowle Park is a friendly, happy place where a large effort goes into making the children feel they belong and that they matter.'

Children enter the school with the skills and knowledge expected of their age. As a consequence of good teaching the pupils progress well. In the 2008 Year 2 teaching assessments standards were well above average with particular strengths in reading and mathematics. This constitutes good and sometimes outstanding progress for pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language. In the current Year 2 pupils are on track to attain above average standards with writing being average. This reflects good achievement given the starting points of these pupils. Progress slows sometimes for lower-ability pupils because the work they are asked to complete is not always specific enough to their needs. Teachers do not consistently plan work that enables these pupils to make the necessary small steps of improvement towards their targets. Teaching is good overall, with particular strengths in the variety of activities presented to pupils. In one arts festival lesson based on the United States of America the pupils were well motivated when choosing from painting, making Native American bracelets, artwork on the laptops, or creating the American flag from a variety of materials. Lessons are well organised and consequently they run smoothly with little time wasted.

Pupils speak enthusiastically about their Victorian day, and visits, such as to Windsor Castle and the Staines local history trail. Such events manifestly motivate them to do well. Extra-curricular activities are very good, and the school successfully attempts to include all pupils through membership of the Fun Time and gardening clubs. Literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge are very well supported through other subjects, as are aspects of the pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. In their personal, health, and social education lessons pupils discuss moral and social issues. In the end-of-day assembly pupils were observed reflecting on their day's learning. It was effectively linked to the school's motto of 'Laugh, Enjoy, Achieve, Respect, Nurture'.

Pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to stay healthy and safe. They talk excitedly of their huff and puff sessions and the popular walking bus. This reflects the excellent efforts of the school in achieving their national awards. The quality of relationships in the school is outstanding and pupils know who to go to if they have a problem. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils make an excellent contribution to their own community, through the school council as well as the playground 'Friendship stop'. The school has very close links with the local community, providing support for an elderly resident's home and the Alzheimer's organisation.

Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are secure. The atmosphere for learning created by the whole staff is supportive and caring and, as a result, allows pupils to thrive. Documentation, such as health and safety and risk assessments, is exemplary. In lessons teaching assistants are proactive and consequently pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress equally as well as their peers. Teachers mark work regularly and provide clear guidance, and as a result pupils know how to improve their work. They also know their learning targets which are linked effectively to the characteristics of good learning such as resilience and good listening skills.

The very good leadership of the headteacher has enabled the school to deliver good academic standards and the exceptional personal development of pupils. Very well-established systems and procedures ensure that despite the absence of a deputy headteacher, the school's monitoring has continued uninterrupted. The school knows its strengths and what needs to be developed. Consequently, leaders have, and share a very clear vision for the future. Writing has already been identified as a school priority; leadership has ensured that it is linked well to staff training, in linking letters and sounds, and is the focus of performance management. On occasions, development planning would benefit from more measurable criteria against which success can be gauged. Targets are challenging. Attendance has improved considerably as a consequence of high ambition and effective measures and is now good. As one parent wrote, 'Communication is excellent between the school and parents - it feels like a partnership.' Some aspects of community cohesion are good. For example, during the arts festival pupils learn about a range of different cultures such as Mexican and South African, and through participating in events such as the Spelthorne music festival the school forges very productive links with the local community. However, overall community cohesion is good because, as the school acknowledges, to meet its next challenge this level of community involvement requires development further afield. The administration team and other support staff are praised by parents and are seen as considerable assets to the school. The excellent governing body has, since the last inspection, improved its monitoring of the school. A governor of the month visits and provides very good written information about various aspects of the school's work, including academic standards. This enables them to fulfil their 'critical friend' role and to challenge and hold the school to account. This, together with rising standards, demonstrates that the school's capacity to improve is good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children achieve well because of high levels of personal development and the good teaching they receive. As a result, they behave exceptionally well and relationships between children and with adults are very positive. Consequently the children settle and concentrate well and are confident in making decisions about what activity they want to do. During the arts festival the children responded well to the varied activities on offer. There was obvious enjoyment and a positive 'buzz' in the lessons as children excitedly made Chinese masks, and chalked a Chinese dragon onto the playground. The lessons are well organised with good attention paid to the free flow of children indoors and outdoors. Reception children progressed well their physical development when sewing lavender sachets as part of their Caribbean work. The children have very good opportunities to reflect on what they have learnt and how they can improve. A wide range of information is recorded about individual children's progress towards each of the early learning goals. Nevertheless, the data is not yet collated to give the Early Years Foundation Stage an overall picture of how well it is doing. Good links with parents help to ensure that necessary initial information is collected. This allows for the development of a profile indicating the needs of the child. This is accompanied by early screening for language and social difficulties. This is one aspect of the overall excellent provision for children's welfare. Good leadership and management help ensure the environment is stimulating and that there is a secure balance of adult-led and child-led activities during the day.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that when teachers plan work for lower-attaining pupils in writing, they consistently enable them to make small steps of improvement towards their targets.

- Develop more links with national and international organisations.

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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?	1
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?	1

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	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?	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?	2
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?	2
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	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	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

03 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Knowle Park Infant School, Staines, TW18 1AJ

You may remember our recent visit to your school. Thank you for making us so welcome and talking to us; we listened carefully to what you had to say. Like you, we feel that yours is a good school. We also feel it does some things very well indeed.

We were particularly pleased with these things:

- how much you enjoy being in school
- as your arts festival work showed, you have lots of exciting things to do and see
- you have very positive attitudes, behave exceptionally well, listen carefully and this helps you to make good progress
- as you told us, your teachers make sure that lessons are 'fun'; one of you said, 'I like school because I learn lots'
- children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a good start to their education
- the adults in the school look after you very well indeed
- your headteacher and other staff organise the school well, and make sure that you have what you need to learn.

We have asked the school to do two things. When teachers plan written work for those of you who find learning more difficult, they need to ensure that it challenges you to make small steps towards your learning target. Second, that the school looks to expand its links with national and international organisations.

Thank you again, and we wish you all the best for your future.

Yours faithfully

Michael Pye

Lead Inspector