

Cheam Common Infants' School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 102963 |
| Local Authority | Sutton |
| Inspection number | 335993 |
| Inspection dates | 16–17 June 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Kevin Hodge |

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

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|--|--|
| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 320 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Noel McEvilly |
| Headteacher | Jennifer Ashley |
| Date of previous school inspection | 2 May 2007 |
| School address | Balmoral Road Worcester Park KT4 8SS |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They watched 14 lessons or part lessons taught by 10 staff and a student teacher. They observed the school's work, and looked at planning, monitoring information, information sent to parents and a range of pupils' past work. Inspectors met with staff, pupils and members of the governing body. They also looked at 81 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and also those returned by staff. Recent questionnaire information of pupils' views collected by the school were also considered.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- if pupils' day-to-day attainment in Years 1 and 2 reflects the levels reached in national assessments
- how well children make progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, particularly in their independent outside activities
- how well senior leaders are involved in monitoring, diagnosing and improving aspects of the school to make it even more effective.

Information about the school

Cheam Common Infants is a bigger than average sized school. Just over 50% of pupils are White British, but there are around 25% of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The range of needs includes academic, social and emotional difficulties. The school has fewer pupils eligible for free school meals than is typically found. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Nursery and three Reception classes. The headteacher is new to the school, having been appointed since the last inspection. The school has awards reflecting its commitment to promoting healthy lifestyles

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Cheam Common Infants is a good school. Pupils fondly talk about the range of things that they can do and they appreciate the happy atmosphere that is apparent to visitors and pupils alike. The high levels of attainment pupils reach in key basic subjects are complemented by good, and some excellent, aspects to their personal development such as their understanding and willingness to adopt healthy lifestyles and the extent to which they feel safe. As a result, they achieve outstanding outcomes overall. One parent's comment reflected many pupils' experience: 'My child loves going to school.' Children make a good start to their school life in the Nursery and Reception classes. Their welfare needs are considered carefully so they feel settled, enjoy school and make good progress. By the time they reach Year 1, they generally exceed the expected levels in their understanding and abilities. By the time they transfer to junior school, they reach high levels in their attainment, particularly in mathematics, as this good progress continues. In day-to-day work seen by inspectors, although progress is generally good, it is sometimes uneven between classes as not all teaching is yet consistently good. Occasionally in lessons, teachers do not demand enough of some pupils, particularly those who are more able, and their marking does not always identify those next steps which could help them enhance their work still more. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as their needs are spotted early and extra tuition, small group work and help from teaching assistants are effective. Regular help for those pupils at the early stages of learning English, with daily help from a specialist teacher, is giving them the confidence to make good progress.

The curriculum provides well for pupils' developing basic skills, and extra-curricular activities are well catered for and attended. A recent 'International week' typified the school's efforts to widen pupils' horizons. That said, the curriculum falls short of being outstanding as some activities in day-to-day work are not planned to best effect and do not always capitalise upon the immediate interests of the pupils.

Good aspects to leadership and management underpin the school's effectiveness. Staff listen closely to pupils' concerns when voiced and help them feel secure and positive about the school. Senior leaders and governors keep day-to-day routines running smoothly and recent staff changes have been handled well. Self-evaluation routines regularly take account of staff, parents and pupils' views. These result in clear and relevant priorities for development. Plans to improve the school's accommodation, while currently on hold, reflect the school's desire to improve further. Combined with the maintenance of high academic levels and its performance since the last inspection, the school has a continued good capacity to improve.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teaching and therefore pupils' progress through the school by:
 - ensuring those who are most able are really stretched in their learning
 - making sure lessons move at a good pace so that pupils complete more work
 - that marking of work in Years 1 and 2 gives more guidance about how pupils can improve
 - giving adults more guidance about how to extend children's independent learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Extend the quality of the curriculum by:
 - making sure activities have relevance to pupils' particularly in subjects such as mathematics so they can apply their skills more readily
 - making sure that topics are planned to take account of the backgrounds and resources already within the school
 - incorporating activities in topics which develop pupils' understanding of communities represented in the wider United Kingdom.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Outcomes for pupils are excellent as their high academic levels are underpinned by good and some excellent aspects to their personal development. They behave well in lessons, only becoming distracted if explanations are a little too long. In the playground, pupils relate well to each other, aided by 'buddies' who take their role seriously in helping things run smoothly. Pupils' commitment to helping those in the local community and within the school is good. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about completing some paintings for a local senior citizens home and in fundraising for relief work abroad. Pupils also like their teachers and lessons. Practical activities are a favourite, such as looking at real fish in a Reception class or exploring the theme of the sea in Year 2. Pupils are generally enthusiastic to learn, although when asked, some say they could be stretched more and occasionally work feels a little repetitive so they slightly lose interest and their progress slows. Recent initiatives to allow pupils to cycle to school help raise their activity levels, as does the well attended sporting clubs and activities. The new playground 'galleon' climbing apparatus is certainly proving a hit with pupils, despite some being sad that they have to wait for their turn to use it! The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development results in them being keen learners, tolerant of each other's views and differences and being willing to help each other. Their knowledge of others' backgrounds is good within the school, at a local level and globally, although their awareness of others represented in the wider United Kingdom is less secure. Pupils' levels of basic skills prepare them well for their next schools and the school is close to raising pupils' attendance to above, rather than average levels, to ensure all pupils benefit from regular attendance.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 1 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 1 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 2 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 1 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

Pupils like their teachers, which is not surprising, as teachers through the school are effective at promoting very good relationships in the classroom and try to make learning fun. Information and communication technology skills are incorporated well into daily and weekly activities. Good teamwork between adults adds to pupils' confidence that they are well cared for and well taught. In Years 1 and 2, teachers tailor the curriculum to pupils' needs effectively for the most part, particularly in catering for pupils' academic skills. However, teaching quality ranges from satisfactory to outstanding at times. In some activities, pupils say they could do more and they do not always know how the skills they are gaining can benefit them or be applied outside the classroom. In the best lessons, pupils are motivated to learn through relevant practically based activities. Teachers' marking of work is regular and gives praise when deserved, although it is not as effective in pointing to the next steps where pupils can improve. Fun weeks such as the recent look at how people live in Africa, Australia and beyond help extend their learning beyond the classroom. Adults are quick to spot those who may be struggling, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and provide timely support

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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so they quickly catch up with classmates. Extra regular help for those at the early stages of learning English, often in small groups, is effective in helping these pupils extend their vocabulary and understanding. Extra-curricular activities provide pupils with an excellent choice of activities to extend their learning beyond the classroom and they attend in high numbers. Pupils feel extremely safe, due in no small part to the good levels of care and support they receive. Pupils say that the school 'buddies' really do help in making playtimes run smoothly, but they recognise that behaviour is not perfect and that some pupils need extra support to help them take part in lessons or playground games. Those pupils who are particularly vulnerable are catered for extremely well, despite occasionally showing challenging behaviour both in class and in the playground. Adults provide insightful support, particularly to pupils with these difficulties. Induction procedures in the Nursery help parents know about school routines so they in turn help the school's efforts to help children settle in quickly, and good links with the adjacent junior school enable pupils to transfer with confidence.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders and managers work well together to share ambition for the school's development and staff were positive about their experience in the school. The headteacher, newly appointed since the last inspection, has involved staff and governors in clear self-evaluation routines to identify which areas of the school need further improvement and to streamline staffing structures to help drive improvement. Lessons observations are regular, although not all pinpoint where pupils' learning could be enhanced further. Nonetheless, they do enable staff to have guidance about improving their practice over time. The school's desire to raise results still further figure highly, recognising that pupils' learning and progress still has room for improvement, promoted by potential improvements in teaching. School leaders analyse pupils' progress carefully to spot if any groups are underperforming, which highlighted that occasionally girls do better than the boys in certain areas. The school is conscientious in ensuring pupils are not discriminated against and all have equal opportunity within the school. Governors are currently reflecting upon their good levels of support, particularly when documenting visits, so it too can be improved still further where possible. They have had a high profile in managing past staffing concerns and in seeking ways of improving the school's buildings. Safeguarding routines are regular and robust, and staff vetting procedures are

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particularly rigorous. The school's success in promoting community cohesion is particularly good in fostering harmonious relationships and the pupils' studies and links with other countries aid their awareness of both local and global communities. Their awareness of people and beliefs found in different parts of the United Kingdom is not as well developed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 2 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Despite the comparative inexperience of some staff, excellent leadership and management have helped staff develop a secure, and often good, level of teaching. Activities are organised well for the most part, ensuring that there is a good balance of activities which children can choose for themselves and focused activities such as developing basic number, language and social skills. Nursery children enjoy the good range of activities, such as identifying dinosaurs in order to promote language skills or exploring the homes of polar bears and penguins in shaving foam 'snow'. Independent activities are usually well planned, although occasionally opportunities are missed to plan activities which develop their basic skills alongside exploring the theme of the day such as 'the sea'. Children in one Reception class did enjoy looking inside a real fish, and being able to see, smell and touch it enhanced their learning considerably. Adults give very good group support, although children are sometimes left too long working alone before an adult helps extend their learning. Teaching of basic skills is usually frequent and pitched at the right level for the children's interests. Some do not always make best use of resources, even though potentially fun. In an otherwise well taught

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number-based lesson, using comparative measures, the choice of resources meant the skill of measuring could not readily be used in everyday situations. The outside areas, recently enhanced by being covered and new safety surfacing installed, are well liked by pupils, despite some of the resources looking in need of updating. There are many areas of strength in children's development, and when they start in Year 1, they often exceed the levels expected for children of this age and, given their above average starting points at times, they make good progress across their areas of learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |

Views of parents and carers

The level of parents' response to the questionnaire was comparatively high. Those that commented were largely positive, citing the happy nature of the school, the good teaching, and communications and individual staff were highlighted for praise. A smaller number of parents voiced areas of concern or points for improvements. These were often individual concerns with no common theme; however, there were some that did emerge, such as communication and some staff members' apparent unwillingness to listen to views and suggestions. While there were a corresponding number of parents who voiced praise in this area, inspectors followed up areas raised anonymously with the school. Inspectors could not find evidence during the inspection to endorse the concerns expressed, as the school has the usual number of channels that parents can express their views. Examples were seen where concerns expressed by parents over different issues were addressed at length. The school and governing body responded to other concerns raised by parents, such as re-routing some entrance arrangements recently.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cheam Common Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team inspector received 83 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 307 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 57 | 69 | 25 | 30 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 57 | 69 | 25 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 50 | 60 | 27 | 33 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 46 | 55 | 31 | 37 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 50 | 60 | 31 | 37 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 52 | 63 | 25 | 30 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 53 | 64 | 30 | 36 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 44 | 53 | 31 | 37 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 45 | 54 | 30 | 36 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 38 | 46 | 41 | 49 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 36 | 43 | 42 | 51 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 46 | 55 | 30 | 36 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 51 | 61 | 30 | 36 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 51 | 45 | 0 | 4 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 41 | 42 | 10 |
| Secondary schools | 8 | 34 | 44 | 14 |
| Sixth forms | 10 | 37 | 50 | 3 |
| Special schools | 32 | 38 | 25 | 5 |
| Pupil referral units | 12 | 43 | 31 | 14 |
| All schools | 9 | 40 | 40 | 10 |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cheam Common Infant School, Worcester Park KT4 8SS

Many thanks for making us feel welcome when we visited your school recently. I enjoyed looking at your nice new climbing galleon! Yours is a good school.

Here are some of the things we found out:

- The children settle very well into the Nursery and Reception classes and enjoy the activities.
- You reach well above the expected standards when you leave, and you achieve brilliantly in most aspects of your work.
- You behave well and try hard in lessons.
- You all said you feel really safe as the school cares for you well.
- You help each other a lot in school and know about others nearby, but not those living further from the school in this country.
- The school helps those of you who sometimes find work difficult to achieve well.
- The staff generally teach you well and the staff and governors work hard to ensure your safety.

We have asked the school to do some things to help it improve further:

- We have asked the teachers to see if they can get you to think even harder in lessons and to help you use your skills in everyday life. We have also asked teachers to give you extra help when they mark your work and for adults to give the youngest children more help when they work in small groups around the class.
- See if the school can plan even more exciting activities for you and help you to find out about others further away in this country.

You can help the school too by continuing to behave well and trying hard in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Hodge

Lead inspector

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