

Furze Platt Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109846
Local Authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	337385
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Derek Aitken

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Bethan Osborne
Headteacher	Mrs Marjorie Clementson
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2006
School address	Oaken Grove Maidenhead Berkshire SL6 6HQ
Telephone number	01628 624385
Fax number	01628 784566
Email address	furzeplatt-inf@rbwm.org

Age group	5–7
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2010
Inspection number	337385

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Half their time in school was spent observing the quality of pupils' learning and progress in lessons. Fourteen lessons or part-lessons were observed and 10 teachers seen. Meetings were held with staff, governors and pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at assessment data, individual education plans, monitoring and evaluation documents, policies and procedures. 110 questionnaires from parents and carers were received and analysed.

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

- pupils' progress in writing
- the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the impact of information and communication technology (ICT) on pupils' learning
- the quality of learning and development opportunities in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is a large infant school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in two Reception classes. In line with the current policy of the local authority, children join Reception either from other settings or without pre-school experience in the term after their fifth birthday in January or in April. Summer-born children enter directly into Year 1. The school holds several awards including the ICT Mark, Activemark and Healthy Schools. The headteacher took up post in September 2009.

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

This is a good school where pupils achieve well. The school's successful strategies for promoting pupils' well-being are reflected in several very positive outcomes for pupils' personal development.

Children make good progress during their relatively short time in Reception, but weaknesses in the quality of the outdoor provision restrict their opportunities to develop their social and investigative skills. Pupils' starting points on entry to Year 1 are slightly above those expected for their age in all areas of learning except literacy, where they are in line with national expectations. Thereafter pupils go on to reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Information and communication technology is used well to promote pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics. Pupils enjoy the challenges posed by mathematical computer games and other practical activities and quickly develop a secure understanding of basic concepts, such as number bonds. Good teaching, coupled with pupils' positive attitudes, ensures that pupils make good progress overall, but lesson planning does not meet the needs of some middle and higher ability pupils sharply enough. The curriculum has significant strengths in promoting pupils' adoption of healthy lifestyles, which is outstanding. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe, and a sophisticated understanding of internet safety. They say 'you should not open e-mail messages from unknown persons or reveal your password.' Shortfalls in the accurate identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities hamper the progress of some pupils, as provision is not always tightly matched to their needs. The staff look after pupils well and this ensures pupils feel safe and valued. Regular fitness routines such as 'Wake and Shake' help to foster good relationships between pupils and adults.

The new headteacher has quickly acquired a sharp grasp of the school's key priorities and begun to tackle them systematically. This is reflected in the school's accurate evaluation of its current performance. The headteacher is supported well by other senior leaders, including governors. They share her determination to raise the quality of provision and have ambitious plans to meet new challenges, for example the first autumn intake of children in Reception in September 2010. This, together with the maintenance of above average standards over several years, provides the school with a good platform for further improvement. New arrangements for developing a more team-based approach to monitoring provision have, however, not yet bedded down. Partly because of this, some of the good ideas for developing pupils' skills in writing have not yet been subject to rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures. Consequently, these ideas have not yet achieved the desired impact on raising standards in writing.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement by:
 - ensuring teachers improve their planning to accelerate the progress of some middle and higher ability pupils
 - ensuring that support programmes for some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are more precisely matched to their needs
 - strengthening procedures for the involvement of managers at all levels in monitoring the curriculum and evaluating the impact of new initiatives on standards.
- Enrich the curriculum for children in Reception by:
 - improving the outdoor provision to provide a wider range of opportunities for children to support each other in their learning and to develop investigative skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Achievement is good, and pupils say they enjoy learning because 'lessons are interesting and we get lots of chances to use computers'. A very large majority of pupils behave responsibly both in lessons and out in the playgrounds. On a few occasions, behaviour and concentration in lessons are less good when the pace of learning is less brisk. Where the quality of learning is outstanding, pupils are well motivated and learn valuable skills, for example, of cooperation and communication.

Good progress leads to above average attainment. Over one third of pupils start Year 1 without having attended the school's Reception classes. Their starting points are below those of the other pupils, but by the end of Year 2, these pupils have also made good progress and largely closed the gap in attainment. Standards have been above average for several years and often significantly so, especially in reading and mathematics. The school recognises that progress in writing has been less rapid and has used a commercial initiative with a view to raising standards. Inspection scrutiny of the quality of writing demonstrates that attainment is above average overall in Year 2, but is highest when expectations are high and assessment is used more effectively. Pupils do best in mathematics and develop problem-solving and other skills, such as spatial awareness, well. Key mathematical vocabulary is usefully reinforced in other subjects, such as art and design technology.

In spite of some shortfalls in provision most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress. This is because lesson planning is adapted well to meet their needs. Pupils with disabilities steadily acquire confidence in letter formation and spellings with the help of the very effective multi-sensory techniques used by the staff.

Pupils take an enthusiastic part in the extensive programmes for sport and physical activities, and exercise energetically in the log park at break-times. Pupils' exceptional

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

attendance and confident expertise with new technology set them up well for the next stage in their learning.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	2
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	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good overall, but varies from outstanding to satisfactory. Learning is best when pupils are highly engaged by a variety of stimulating activities. For example, in a mathematics lesson based on the theme of '100', pupils worked enthusiastically in pairs or small groups on a wide range of problem-solving games. In an inventive literacy lesson, the teacher made excellent use of ICT to enable pupils to examine their work critically, feed back to their classmates and expand their knowledge of descriptive adjectives. Such high-quality teaching is not evident in all lessons and occasionally pupils of middle and higher ability are not sufficiently challenged. Sometimes pupils spend too long on the carpet and their concentration wavers which slows progress. Most marking is good and provides useful next steps guidance for pupils, but this is not routinely linked to pupils' writing targets.

Good partnerships with external organisations provide pupils with a wide range of

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

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

experiences which enhance their enjoyment of the curriculum. These include football skills run by Wycombe Wanderers and sessions in African drumming. Expert teaching enables even the younger pupils to acquire a keen sense of rhythm. Themed weeks, such as 'Flower Week', including 'seeds for Africa', promote pupils' curiosity about the natural world and raise their awareness of other cultures. The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory, as there is some variation in the quality of individual education plans and intervention programmes.

Pupils are cared for well. They say that there is always a friend or adult who will lend a listening ear. The school makes good use of specialist services offered by outside agencies such as speech and language therapy to support pupils. The school's communication with parents and carers has been enhanced by the establishment of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This keeps parents and carers fully up to date about their children's work and provides them with numerous ideas for extending their children's enjoyment of learning.

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?

The new headteacher's strategic approach and evident ambition has gained her the respect and confidence of the staff, governors and parents and carers. Useful plans have been established to review aspects of the school's provision. The school has taken initial steps to distribute leadership more widely to enhance accountability. This is a well-conceived plan, as some monitoring and review processes are not yet rigorous enough to move the school up to the outstanding level to which leaders aspire.

The school promotes equal opportunities well, particularly with regard to the well-being of pupils. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils, especially child protection, are of good quality. Staff training is logged and all requirements for safer recruitment are met. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. It has recently taken successful steps to increase the involvement of minority ethnic groups in school life.

Senior leaders are supported well by a pro-active and knowledgeable governing body which discharges its statutory responsibilities effectively.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

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

Assessments carried out in Reception shortly after children start school indicate that their skills and knowledge vary but are largely in line with those expected for their age. Children settle well in Reception because routines, such as self-registering, collecting mini-whiteboards and taking turns, promote a sense of personal responsibility. Children see their views are valued because they are asked to help plan their daily activities around their personal interests. The teacher's methods and resources engage the children well in their learning during the carpet sessions and enable them to make good progress. ICT is used extensively to promote children's confidence in learning independently. For example, children skilfully used the drag-and-drop facility on the electronic smartboard to identify the current day, date and month, while other children made expert use of a computer drawing program to design and modify the fronts of houses. Children do not benefit from enough quality experiences outdoors to develop their social and investigative skills to the full. Welfare arrangements are secure and healthy living, in particular, is promoted well. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well and extensive planning is being implemented effectively to prepare for the major changes in provision in September 2010.

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

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	2

Views of parents and carers

Just under two thirds of parents and carers returned a questionnaire. The responses indicate a substantial degree of satisfaction, particularly with pupils' enjoyment of school, their sense of feeling safe and adoption of healthy lifestyles. There were no significant areas of concern, although a few parents and carers expressed the view in written comments that their children were not being challenged enough.

Inspectors' findings endorse the views of parents and carers and are reflected elsewhere in this report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Furze Platt 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 received 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 185 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	71	65	32	29	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	65	59	42	38	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	39	35	60	55	6	6	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	49	45	54	49	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	56	51	51	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	56	51	50	45	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	58	53	49	45	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)	33	30	59	54	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	39	53	48	5	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	36	58	53	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	33	58	53	3	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	50	45	54	49	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	66	60	41	37	2	2	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



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.

12 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Furze Platt Infant School, Maidenhead SL6 6HQ

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome in your school. We will remember how friendly you were and how willing you were to talk to us about your interests and your school. You and your parents and carers certainly seem to enjoy using the school's VLE to help your learning.

Furze Platt Infants is a good school. These are some important things that it does well.

- You know very well how to keep healthy and take every chance to keep fit.
- You were right to say you have a super knowledge of how to stay safe on the internet and are confident in using information and communication technology.
- Children get off to a good start in Reception.
- You make good progress so that by the end of Year 2, your standards are above average.
- You are taught well by teachers who care for you and arrange extra lessons, such as African drumming, to make your learning even more interesting.
- You behave well.

To help you make even faster progress, we have asked the school to do four things.

- Make sure that teachers plan carefully to match work to the needs of all groups of pupils.
- Make some improvements to the school's plans for helping pupils who find learning more difficult.
- Make sure that school leaders check very carefully on how well their good plans for improving your standards, for example in writing, are working.
- Improve the outdoor area for Reception children.

You can help by keeping up your super attendance, and by working hard, especially on your writing.

Yours sincerely

Derek Aitken

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.