

Heatherside Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116002
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338700
Inspection dates	18–19 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	294
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Scott
Headteacher	Christine Lynch
Date of previous school inspection	2 March 2007
School address	Reading Road South Fleet Hampshire GU52 7TH
Telephone number	01252 617101
Fax number	01252 810065
Email address	headteacher@heatherside-inf.hants.sch.uk

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

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors spent seven and a half hours looking at learning, visited 15 lessons and observed 10 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and pupils and a small number of parents and carers bringing their children to school were also spoken to. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at analyses of pupils' progress, development planning and monitoring, local authority reports, a range of policies and procedures including those associated with safeguarding, curriculum planning documents and a sample of pupils' work. They also scrutinised questionnaires returned by 128 parents and carers, and 36 staff.

An Ofsted administrative error resulted in the omission of one question in the parental questionnaire. Whilst this has not affected the overall outcome of the inspection it does mean that the parental response on the question '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)' is not recorded in the report.

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

- the school's progress in addressing the decline in attainment reflected in the results of national assessments last year
- the accuracy of assessment and use of this information to track and support pupils' progress.

Information about the school

This is a large infant school. It shares a campus with the adjacent junior school with which it has strong links. The new headteacher took up post in April last year. The breakfast and after-school clubs which serve both the infant and junior schools are run by a private provider and did not form part of this inspection. The area around the school is relatively socially advantaged. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and only a small minority speak English as an additional language. The school has been awarded Healthy School status and the Becta Active Mark.

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

Heatherside Infants is extremely popular with its pupils. Many parents wrote or spoke to inspectors praising the level of education and care and the quality of the school staff. As one parent said, 'This school is fantastic, the teachers are lovely and our children are very happy here.' Staff and parents and carers work exceptionally well together in supporting pupils' learning. For example, a considerable number of parents and carers work with groups in lessons.

The very positive ethos is evident in pupils' outstanding behaviour and excellent attitudes to learning. Relationships between staff and pupils are exceptionally good so pupils really want to please their teachers and work very hard. All pupils, including those with learning, behavioural or language needs, achieve well in both their academic and personal development.

Until recently pupils' attainment in the Year 2 national assessments was high. More children now enter the school with lower-level language skills than previously and, as the school had expected, attainment declined last year although it remained above average. The decline was also partly due to staff with expertise in the analysis of data showing pupils' progress leaving the school. This meant that progress slowed because it was not tracked precisely enough to pinpoint weaknesses and speedily address them. The new headteacher is tackling this well, being exceptionally good at helping senior leaders and subject coordinators acquire the expertise to identify where progress needs to be boosted. This information is shared effectively with all staff and governors, enabling a consistent approach to tackling weaknesses. There is clear evidence of improvement, for example in the quality of pupils' writing and in their ability to solve mathematical problems. The school is well aware that still more needs to be done, especially by building on the good start made in linking sounds to letters by helping to clearly identify the steps pupils need to take to gain more advanced reading skills.

The greater involvement of staff and governors in monitoring and evaluating progress has strengthened the quality of self-evaluation and the school's ability to address weaknesses. This, together with the excellent teamwork and commitment seen, gives confidence that the school has good capacity for further improvement and is well placed to regain the high attainment seen in the past.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure the recent improvement in the work of senior staff and subject leaders so that all contribute effectively to monitoring the school's performance and successfully addressing weaknesses.

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- Establish more accurate and rigorous assessment procedures in reading so that teaching can closely address areas where pupils need to improve.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' great enthusiasm for school and excellent behaviour in lessons significantly support their learning. Pupils benefit from the consistent approach to teaching and learning seen throughout the school so their progress is uniformly good. Reception children become confident and independent and make a good start in learning important skills, especially those related to literacy and numeracy. This is especially well done in matching letters to sounds which is built on well through the school. For example, by Year 2, many pupils confidently identify the correct letter pattern in words such as 'railway' despite the long 'a' sound being spelled differently in other words. The school is well aware that more complex reading skills such as comprehension can be developed further by improving the systems for assessing pupils' ability in these aspects. The school is addressing weaknesses in writing and mathematical problem solving well, with pupils now making good progress in these aspects. For example, Year 2 pupils are becoming exceptionally good at applying their knowledge of fractions to solve problems, the higher attainers confidently working with difficult numbers such as three eighths. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. The school is well on course to improve on last year and ensure that attainment continues to rise further. Attendance is above average and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils' personal development is good in all areas. Pupils are well aware of how to lead healthy and safe lifestyles and make an important contribution to the school and wider community. Pupils respect the feelings of others, ensuring that relationships are positive and any bullying or name calling is extremely rare. Pupils' good spiritual development is evident in their reflection in assemblies. Their knowledge of other cultures is enhanced well, including through links with a children's home in Sri Lanka.

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

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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The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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 Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The willingness of staff to increase their good expertise was evident throughout all the discussions inspectors held with them. That staff want to do their very best for pupils is clearly recognised by pupils and their parents and carers. A major impact of teachers' increasing knowledge of progress across the school has been the enhanced quality of teamwork in addressing weaknesses. Staff are keen to increase these skills further and to improve the quality of assessment in reading. These growing strengths support curriculum development, especially in literacy and numeracy, including opportunities for applying these skills in other subjects. The very good accommodation and grounds are used especially well to support learning.

A consistent approach ensures that lessons are well planned to meet the needs of all pupils, a particular strength is in ensuring that pupils in the mixed-age classes do as well as their peers. Learning support assistants and parent and carer helpers are very well briefed on how to support learning. Good quality discussions support oracy skills and help pupils to express themselves well in their written work. When working with the teacher, higher attaining pupils are challenged and moved on throughout the lesson exceptionally well. However, on a small minority of occasions this is not so strong. Most adults explain things clearly so that pupils understand easily and know what is expected of them. Occasionally this is unclear and some pupils have to ask for extra help. Some teaching is highly stimulating, leading to excellent progress. For example, the outstanding level of challenge and pace, deployment of staff and use of resources led to exceptional learning in a mixed-age class.

Pupils are well cared for. The school fully meets government guidelines for keeping pupils safe and is keen to tighten its procedures even further. Vulnerable pupils are supported exceptionally well, with a careful check being kept on their progress. For example, very regular monitoring of pupils who speak little or no English ensures their emerging needs are swiftly responded to.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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<p>The quality of teaching</p> <p>Taking into account:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The use of assessment to support learning</p>	2
	2
<p>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</p>	2
<p>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</p>	2

How effective are leadership and management?

There is a strong commitment to improvement. Over the last two terms the new headteacher has put in place effective strategies to increase staff expertise in monitoring progress. All staff now have a much clearer picture of the progress individual pupils should be making and what they can achieve in the future. Leaders are becoming skilled at evaluating progress across year groups and subjects, using this information to accurately predict where pupils should be and how provision can be adapted to achieve this. Self-evaluation is now much sharper and development planning better focused on specific areas for improvement. The success of this is seen especially in writing and mathematics, although assessment information in reading lacks the precision to achieve similar success in this area.

Governors are well informed, having a more secure understanding of where pupils' progress can be improved, so governors support development priorities well. Governors developed and maintain the excellent school website, a key factor in the outstanding partnership with parents and carers who receive exceptionally good information through this, including on unexpected school closures. The school works closely with other groups and agencies, exceptionally so with the adjacent junior school which enhances transfer procedures.

High quality teamwork seen throughout the whole school community supports pupils' good equality of opportunity in all classes. The effective promotion of community cohesion ensures that pupils respect those from different backgrounds, making the school a very happy and harmonious place. Rigorous attention is paid to safeguarding and all systems work effectively in this respect. For example, the school building and grounds are very safe and secure.

These are the grades for leadership and management

<p>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</p> <p>Taking into account:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The leadership and management of teaching and learning</p>	2
	2
<p>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</p>	2
<p>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</p>	1

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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

The warm and welcoming environment and very good relationships with adults help children settle well. There is some variation, but standards on entry are generally slightly above typical expectations. Children's good progress ensures the majority attain above average standards by Year 1. Teaching is always good and occasionally outstanding. A wide range of activities meet children's needs well across all areas, with important skills such as learning simple calculation and sounding out the letters in words promoted well. The excellent outdoor area is used especially well. For example, children thoroughly enjoyed building the third little pig's house out of bricks, retelling the story as they went along. The high level of adult support, including that provided by parents and carers, benefits children especially well. An adult is always on hand to intervene appropriately and move children on in their independent activities. These are carefully planned to support progress, for example in using measuring cubes to see which the tallest beanstalk is or using standard measures to work out children's height to complete the information needed for their 'passport'. There are a few occasions when time could be used more effectively to support learning. For example, some break times are over long. The well-managed provision ensures excellent teamwork amongst Reception staff. As in other year groups, staff are still increasing their skills at using monitoring information to pinpoint specific aspects for improvement.

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

A high number of parents and carers returned the questionnaires, many taking time to

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write comments or speak to inspectors. There is considerable satisfaction with the school which has, in return, ensured a high level of commitment amongst parents and carers in supporting the school's work. Inspection evidence shows that parents and carers make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning.

Parents' and carers' individual comments are more positive than negative and there is no pattern to the latter. Where individual negative comments are made, for example on induction procedures, other parents and carers had the opposite view. The vast majority of parents and carers agree their child enjoys school, praise the level of care and support and are very happy with the quality of education.

Typical comments are:

- I feel the school has such a lovely atmosphere
- the teacher really knows my son and stretches him
- communication is brilliant. WELL DONE!
- the staff work as a strong and coherent team.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Heatherside 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 128 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 294 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	85	66	40	31	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	101	79	27	21	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	65	51	57	45	5	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	68	53	50	39	5	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	90	70	35	27	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	89	70	38	30	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	76	61	46	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)	46	36	28	22	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	64	50	56	44	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	61	48	55	43	3	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	72	56	48	38	3	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	85	66	37	29	3	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	95	74	29	23	3	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.



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20 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Heatherside Infant School, Fleet, GU52 7TH

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We very much enjoyed our time talking to you and seeing all the things you do. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their lunchtime to talk to us. We think your school is good and are delighted that you and your parents and carers agree.

Here are some of the things we found out were especially good about the school.

- Your behaviour is excellent and you are very friendly and helpful.
- You are especially good at listening to your teachers and you work very hard.
- Progress is good and attainment is above average.
- Staff plan lots of interesting activities and teach you well.
- You are well looked after and are very safe and secure in school.
- The school and your parents and carers work really well together to help you learn.
- Your new headteacher is doing a good job and staff and governors work very well together to help your school improve.

Here are some of the things we have asked the school to improve.

- Make sure all staff keep a really good check on how well you are doing so that they can help you to do even better.
- Develop better ways to check how well you are doing in reading so that you can do your very best. You can help by using all the clues, like remembering what has already happened, to help you understand.

Yours sincerely

D Wilkinson

Lead Inspector

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