

Maple Ridge School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116605
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338837
Inspection dates	5–6 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Kay (Kathleen) Charlton

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	67
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Keith Norman
Headteacher	Debby Gooderham
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2007
School address	Maple Crescent Basingstoke RG21 5SX
Telephone number	01256 323639
Fax number	01256 841059
Email address	admin@mapleridge.hants.sch.uk

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 two additional inspectors. They observed 10 lessons and all six teachers were seen. The inspectors held discussions with pupils, staff, governors and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school improvement plan, pupils' statements of special educational needs, planning and assessment information, minutes of governors' meetings and monitoring information. Fifty-two parents' and carers' questionnaires were scrutinised.

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

- the impact of leaders and managers in ensuring that all pupils achieve as well as they can with a focus on the ways subjects are coordinated
- the effectiveness of teaching in challenging the wide range of pupils' needs in each class
- the success of the curriculum in meeting pupils' specific needs, particularly when these are complex
- the effectiveness of the systems to set and track challenging targets for pupils to ensure that all make the progress of which they are capable.

Information about the school

Maple Ridge is a special school designated for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The needs of pupils have changed over time and there are a significant number with additional behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and/or autism. A few have severe learning difficulties. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or are being assessed for one. There are two children in the Early Years Foundation Stage who are taught in a mixed Reception/Year 1 class. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and none speak English as an additional language. The school provides an outreach service to mainstream schools. It has a range of awards including Healthy Schools and Activemark.

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

Maple Ridge is a good school. It has a number of outstanding features, notably in pupils' personal development and in the care, guidance and support they receive. Behaviour is good and pupils of all ages contribute exceptionally well to both the school and local community. Pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, thoroughly enjoy learning and, as a result of good teaching, make good progress and achieve well. In information and communication technology (ICT), they make very good progress. Some lessons are outstanding, as seen in a Year 1 numeracy lesson based on the book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. However, in a minority of lessons, staff do not always make the best use of the planned learning outcomes to challenge pupils with very differing abilities to achieve all that they might. The school has highlighted this as a priority for improvement.

The good curriculum includes a very strong programme of personal and social development. There is an impressive range of enrichment activities with particular strengths in music and sport. It has been adapted very well to meet the changing needs of the pupil population. A good example is the success the school is having in using individual timetables with identified pupils to give them the structure needed to work in whole-class situations. It has rightly recognised that for a small number of pupils with very specialist needs the opportunities for pupils to work in this way are still not sufficiently extensive. Links with parents and carers, through very high- quality home/school liaison work, as well as with other schools and outside agencies, are excellent. These, and the very strong relationships established between staff and pupils, underpin the outstanding care, guidance and support provided and also the extremely effective safeguarding procedures. As a result, pupils feel very safe and secure. They make noticeable gains in their confidence, independence and in their ability to reflect about the effects of their actions on others. They are extremely aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and their spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. The well-established leadership team has a good blend of skills and experience and a strong determination to improve. Leaders are discerning in their monitoring and very open to challenge, particularly that provided by the governing body. They ensure that all staff are fully involved in the school's self-review process so that there is clarity about areas of strength and also what needs to be improved. Professional development of staff is very well focused and fully supports school improvement. The strong commitment from all to wanting the best for pupils means that the school is well placed to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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

- Improve teaching by ensuring that staff use the lessons' planned learning outcomes consistently to challenge all pupils to achieve as well as they can.
- Extend the opportunities for the small number of pupils with very specialist needs to work on structured individual timetables and so help them develop the skills needed to work as part of the whole class.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils enjoy their lessons and, whatever their backgrounds and complexity of need, make good progress from their various starting points. By the end of Year 6, they develop skills in communication, literacy, numeracy and in information and communication technology (ICT) that ensure they are well prepared for future learning. They respond particularly well to the practical activities and sensory experiences that are provided in many lessons and, in this way, learn quickly to understand concepts, such as division and how to tell the time. A much more systematic programme of teaching reading and writing has been introduced since the last inspection. This has paid off and is particularly evident in the quality of some of the pupils' writing.

Pupils take a full and active part in an extensive range of physical activities, such as regular swimming, cycling, horse-riding and also a wide range of sports that have been facilitated by the local sports partnership. This has helped the school to attain the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards. Pupils try hard to meet their behaviour targets and behaviour is good. The vast majority of pupils attend well. Overall attendance is average because it is affected by a very small number of pupils with medical needs. Pupils' excellent spiritual and cultural development was evident in an assembly about the importance of being part of a family where pupils used moments of reflection exceptionally well and showed a very clear awareness of different cultures. Activities to support the school community, such as working as buddies or as part of the school council, and the wider community, by helping the elderly in a nearby care home, are undertaken with great enthusiasm. All are proud to be members of Maple Ridge and are really looking forward to getting together as a whole school at the annual Summer Ball.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment 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	1
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	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan their lessons showing a clear awareness of the needs of individual pupils. Along with classroom assistants, they make good use of time and resources to ensure that learning is enjoyable for all. A wide range of communication techniques are used and there is a highly effective approach to behaviour management. Pupils trust the staff and are confident to ask for help. Since the last inspection, there has been a focus on using assessment, particularly the planned learning outcomes, as a means of improving pupils' learning. Staff effectively use probing questioning and ongoing reminders to ensure that, whatever their ability, pupils make good progress. In a few lessons, opportunities to challenge pupils in this way are missed.

The rich curriculum provides clear links between subjects and also very stimulating activities. There is a wide range of clubs, many visits out of school, including residential trips for Years 5 and 6, and many visitors come to the school. The provision is effectively reviewed in the light of pupils' changing needs and, as a result, it now includes an increased range of therapies. There are well-thought-out plans to extend the opportunities for a small number of pupils with very specialist needs to work through structured timetables.

Excellent care, guidance and support ensure all aspects of pupils' personal development are underpinned by rigorous policies and structures as well as very high expectations from each member of staff. The work of the home/school liaison officer is a vital part of this and links with others, including health professionals, are used exceptionally well to enhance the provision. Vulnerable pupils are carefully monitored and, as needed, individually tailored programmes are put in place. Pupils are closely supported when

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

joining or leaving the school, and are given excellent guidance for the next steps in their educational lives.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior leaders drive ambition very assiduously. Subjects are coordinated well so that improvements take place. Senior leaders work very well as a team with the dedicated and hard-working staff. Together, they strive to remove any obstacles to learning for pupils and show a strong commitment to the planned improvements for those with very complex needs. The school's good promotion of equality of opportunity and ways of tackling discrimination are evident in all aspects of its work. The leadership ensures that pupils are set challenging targets and the tracking of their progress is robust. Extremely effective systems and procedures are in place to ensure students are secure and safe. Arrangements for child protection meet government regulations and staff implement them rigorously. Risk assessments are detailed and thorough. The governing body plays a full and active part in school improvement. Governors have undertaken an in-depth analysis of the school's contribution to community cohesion; they are clear that there is excellent work at a local level and more is planned at national and international levels. The governors are effective as 'critical friends' and they help to ensure that the school provides good value for money.

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	1

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 partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
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 children achieve well because of good quality provision. Their achievements in personal, social and emotional development are outstanding. Resources are very good and indoor learning is of a high quality. The outdoor area is much improved since the last inspection and some good opportunities are provided to cover all areas of learning. Even so, the school recognises the outdoor environment does not match the quality of provision indoors and rightly plans to address this because of the limitations it places on the quality of children's learning.

Relationships are very strong so that children quickly gain confidence, independence and learn to make choices. A wide range of interesting and purposeful activities are organised to match the children's age and ability. They really enjoy, for example playing with gadgets that encourage them to replicate sounds, as was seen when one reproduced the sounds made by a pig. They also take great pride in using ICT to present their ideas. The opportunities that the children have to go swimming are a notable strength of the provision.

Staff care for children exceptionally well and the links with parents and carers are extremely positive. The leadership is intent on making sure that there is a constant pattern of improvement and is very clear about the ways this can be achieved.

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 good number of questionnaires were returned. They indicate that the vast majority of parents and carers are delighted with what the school achieves for their children. Their

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

views are exemplified by comments such as 'My child has loved being at Maple Ridge and has made significant progress in all areas.' Inspectors agree with parents' and carers' positive views and evidence supports that they have every reason to be proud of what their children achieve in this good school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Maple Ridge 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 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 67 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	67	15	29	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	35	67	16	31	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	42	27	52	1	2	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	48	22	42	4	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	58	21	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	50	25	48	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	54	23	44	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)	23	44	27	52	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	58	20	38	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	56	20	38	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	60	17	33	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	31	60	19	37	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	60	20	38	0	0	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.



7 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Maple Ridge School, Basingstoke, RG21 5SX

Thank you for making us so welcome. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit and the opportunity to see how well you are doing.

We found that Maple Ridge is a good school where you make good progress. Virtually all of you enjoy school and you try hard. Your care is excellent, as are the ways in which staff make sure you are safe. Teaching is good and the staff are very effective at helping you improve your behaviour. We were impressed with how well you are doing in information and communication technology. It was good to hear how much you enjoy visits out of school, for example to Privett Park, where some of you stayed overnight. It is great to see how well you help each other by being on the school council or by being a 'buddy', and your understanding about keeping healthy is excellent.

The headteacher and staff work hard to help you. We think it is important that you make as much progress as possible and have asked them to keep reminding you about the planned learning outcomes of lessons to make sure you all achieve your best. Also, we have asked them to make more use of the 'special timetables' to help the few of you who find it very difficult working in the whole-class group.

We hope that you will continue to try your best and hope that you enjoy the Summer Ball.

Yours sincerely

Kay Charlton

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.