

Polesden Lacey Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125052
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	340706
Inspection dates	18–19 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Richard Blackmore

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	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sean Whetstone
Headteacher	Rosie Keedy
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector. The majority of time was spent observing learning, including six lessons taught by four teachers. The inspector held meetings with governors, members of staff and groups of pupils. He observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including curriculum planning, data on pupils' progress, samples of pupils' work, attendance data and school improvement plans. He also evaluated 59 parent questionnaires.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at the following:

- the success of the school's actions to raise achievement in reading and mathematics
- how effectively assessment is used to help pupils make progress
- how much pupils know and understand about cultures other than their own
- the effectiveness of the school's monitoring of teaching and learning.

Information about the school

Polesden Lacey Infant School is smaller than most schools that cater for 4-7-year-old pupils. Most pupils are from White British families and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average. Most of these pupils have speech and language, and social, emotional and behavioural needs. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the one Reception class. The school has been awarded the Green flag Eco Award, Activemark, Working in Partnership with Parents Award and the Enhanced Healthy Schools Plus accreditation.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Polesden Lacey Infant School is outstanding. Its reputation is justifiably high, both within the local community and further afield, because of its inspirational eco-friendly culture and inclusive and nurturing environment. Children receive a warm welcome to the Reception class and quickly become happy and eager to learn. A comment made by a parent describing the school as 'a truly special small school' reflects the school's popularity. Attainment is consistently high throughout the school and all pupils, including more able pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve exceptionally well. This is because the school has an unstinting focus on each individual pupil in terms of both academic and personal development.

Throughout the school, pupils help one another in this positive family atmosphere where relationships are very warm and constructive. Outstanding behaviour significantly contributes to the highly purposeful atmosphere in lessons. Pupils love learning and coming to school and as a result they very much enjoy the many varied activities on offer. Attendance is above average. Pupils relish taking on responsibilities, such as membership of the school council, being playground monitors and buddies. The 'green team' makes a further impact on the pupils' understanding, and collaborative work in this area superbly develops pupils' in-depth knowledge of current issues. This, and outstanding basic skills, prepares them very well for the challenges of later life.

Highly focused teaching and motivating lessons help pupils learn exceptionally well, providing independent and group work activities that quickly develop pupils' ability to think for themselves and methodically solve a range of problems. Teachers make it very clear to pupils what they are expected to learn and how strategies can be applied. Pupils are highly motivated by tasks that provide challenge for all ability levels. Detailed analysis of data and meticulous marking of pupils' work ensure that the setting of targets is effective in enabling pupils to make outstanding progress. In the very few instances where teaching is less effective, it is because assessment information is not always used to show pupils precisely what their next steps should be. The curriculum is exciting and creative, providing outstanding opportunities for enrichment and enjoyment. It helps pupils gain an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy eating and lifestyle, and this is reflected in the healthy choices made for lunch and enthusiastic and energetic participation in clubs that promote health and fitness.

The school provides excellent care, guidance and support. Pastoral care is a high priority for the school and there is a close partnership with outside agencies to ensure pupils and their families receive high quality advice and support. Short- and long-term progress is very well tracked, so that any difficulties are quickly spotted, and interventions are swift and precisely address individual pupils' specific needs.

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The teamwork of staff is exceptional. The headteacher actively encourages all teachers and the highly committed teaching assistants to develop their teaching, support and leadership roles. This results in well focused and appropriate initiatives that have had an outstanding impact on improving provision in school and attaining high academic standards. Highly effective and accurate self-evaluation is undertaken by leaders at all levels and this enables the school to focus its efforts on key priorities. As a result, there is outstanding capacity to improve even further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the use of assessment information in the small number of lessons where this is less effective so that all pupils have a clear understanding of the next steps in their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils build skills, knowledge and understanding rapidly, especially in reading. They are eager to learn and to support each other in their learning. Progress in lessons is at least good and usually excellent because of the pupils' enjoyment and engagement that is immediately apparent. Pupils rise well to the numerous challenges in lessons and work constructively together, discussing one another's ideas and answers so that thinking is very often at a high level. Actions to improve the achievement of a few pupils who were making no better than satisfactory progress last year are especially noteworthy due to the impact of one-to-one support. For example, in mathematics, a group of girls was highlighted as in need of additional support and guidance to reach their full potential. The subsequent interventions quickly sharpened the pupils' knowledge and confidence in applying strategies that previously were not fully understood. Overall, the school has been very successful in raising pupils' achievement in reading and mathematics.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make very good progress due to a range of tailored support programmes that have been exceptionally well delivered by teachers, support staff and outside agencies. Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology (ICT) which is used effectively to develop reading and writing skills across nearly all the curriculum areas.

Pupils are extremely positive about their school. They grow quickly in confidence and self-esteem. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding because staff seize every opportunity to explore and develop pupils' knowledge of different cultures, customs and traditions from other parts of the United Kingdom and wider world. For example, in an assembly, pupils dressed up in clothing from India and described Indian objects with terrific enthusiasm and a thirst for asking searching questions. Consequently, they have a clear understanding of other faiths and lifestyles in other countries. Pupils supervise and record the energy efficiency of cloakrooms, corridors and classrooms, and this helps to develop excellent moral and social understanding as this is often completed in teams. Pupils say they feel very safe in school because of the excellent care and attention of all staff in and out of classrooms.

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 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	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The overall quality of teaching is outstanding. During the inspection, teaching was at least good and in several of the lessons observed it was of exceptional quality. For example, in one lesson, the highly effective use of the interactive whiteboard and laptops helped pupils to produce high-quality rhyming poems. The quality of teaching is consistently effective in all parts of the school and, as one pupil said, 'teachers teach you what you don't know'. This is reinforced by the quality of work presented in pupils' books which improves continuously and quickly. From the outset, teachers develop pupils' responses and ideas, and pupils manage their own work very well with timely guidance from other staff.

The curriculum shows a good balance of relevant and interesting themes that are well planned to motivate pupils and build on prior progress. Information and communication technology is a strength and is the basis for much of the cross-curricular work that enhances lessons. Pupils comment that the things they learn about are very interesting and they see the reason for the work they are asked to complete. For example, in Year 2, the lost 'Golden Badger' had written to pupils individually, following on from a lesson

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

the previous day, and was bored and needed cheering up. The class was then observed feverishly writing adventure stories employing adverbs and adjectives very well. This lesson did much to build their knowledge of empathy and their skills of writing.

Support staff make strong contributions to pupils' learning due to the incisive, rigorous and relentless challenge they provide to ensure pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, learn very quickly and confidently. Pupils who are in vulnerable circumstances are supported exceptionally well and benefit from a wide range of effective strategies to meet their specific needs. For example, the 'Fun Foxes' group provides an excellent opportunity for pupils who find social situations more difficult to receive expert guidance and a boost to their self- belief.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and all the staff, in whatever role they occupy, are part of a coherent team in which all are strongly committed to promoting the best outcomes for pupils. The school has an excellent understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement through rigorous monitoring and evaluation. Consequently, the leadership has embedded a culture of striving for continuous improvement, checking the quality of the teaching and learning, and deploying resources excellently. The school's provision for the promotion of equal opportunities is outstanding, largely due to the detailed understanding of each pupil, and its importance is understood by all. Safeguarding procedures are highly effective and closely monitored by the chair of governors who provides excellent leadership and direction for the work of the governing body in shaping the future of the school. The school promotes community cohesion outstandingly well and the impact of its work is seen in the quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school engages and communicates very well with parents and encourages a cohesive approach between home and school. Other partnerships which are well developed, including those with the Effingham Learning Partnership, consistently contribute to pupils' outstanding achievement.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1

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The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Reception class with skills that are broadly in line with typical age-related expectations. Induction and initial assessment strategies are excellent. The summer club provides children and parents with the opportunity to experience the Reception class on numerous occasions in the summer term prior to the start in September. Care for children is excellent because staff with responsibility for each child's development get to know them and their families well, before they start. Children at the beginning of the school day are happy, settled and eager to learn. Children thrive and make very good progress towards the Early Learning Goals, not only because of high-quality care, but also because of excellent teaching and the detailed planning for the adult-led learning alongside children's play inside and outside. They enjoy their experience because their time is fun and exciting. Consequently, they rapidly pick up speed in building skills and knowledge in all areas of learning. They were observed very seriously taking on the role of police officers in the outdoor area 'logging incidents', which contributed to their literacy skills, and 'apprehending suspects', developing speaking skills to a high level. All staff regularly make notes about what children achieve during each session, and the information is used very productively to determine what should be learnt next and the appropriate level of challenge. Staff listen to children's views and are not afraid to adjust planning to take account of their interests, resulting in continuous opportunities to progress quickly in their learning. Excellent leadership ensures that all staff work together extremely effectively.

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

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers hold positive views of the school. A very small number of parents and carers showed concerns about their child's enjoyment of school. Inspection findings found pupils' enjoyment of school was very high. Parents unanimously stated that their children are kept safe and an overwhelming majority of them thought the school is well led and managed. The inspection evidence agrees with these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Polesden Lacey 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.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	73	13	22	3	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	52	88	7	12	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	59	22	37	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	59	21	36	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	39	66	18	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	63	21	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	55	93	4	7	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)	43	73	13	22	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	75	12	20	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	58	21	36	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	66	18	31	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	51	86	7	12	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	80	12	19	1	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.



20 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Polesden Lacey Infant School, Bookham, KT23 4PT

Thank you for a warm welcome when I visited school recently. You explained your thoughts and ideas about the school very clearly. You go to an outstanding school and it has a many strengths.

- You make outstanding progress. By the time you leave school, you reach standards that are high.
- You are extremely well cared for and given very good quality help to make sure you learn quickly.
- You have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and be healthy.
- Children in Reception thoroughly enjoy school, work extremely hard and cooperate very well.
- You have excellent relationships with each other and your teachers and teaching assistants.
- Your school keeps you very safe.
- You have an excellent understanding of how other people in the world live.
- You love your clubs and trips and visits.

I have asked your headteacher and staff to make your school even better by making sure you that you always know exactly how to improve your work. We know you will help your teachers make these improvements. As a start, you can tell your teacher if you do not know or understand how to make your work better.

Yours sincerely

Richard Blackmore

Lead inspector

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