

William Cobbett Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125077
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	340713
Inspection dates	30 November –1 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Joy Considine

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	376
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Michael Jones
Headteacher	Mrs Christine Peppin
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited twelve lessons, and held meetings with staff, pupils and governors. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' work, assessment information, school improvement planning and other documentation related to the inspection. The outcomes of 86 questionnaires from parents and carers were also evaluated.

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

- standards and progress in English and mathematics for all groups of pupils
- the quality of teaching and learning, the extent to which lessons meet the needs of all pupils and how well the school uses assessment information to plan lessons
- the impact that leadership and management make on raising standards and achievement
- how well the school promotes community cohesion.

Information about the school

William Cobbett is situated just outside Farnham in a mixed socio-economic population. It is larger than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils who have free school meals is much lower than average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is also very low. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the proportion who have a statement of special educational needs are higher than average. The school has a 20-place unit for pupils who have complex special needs including learning, language, physical and behavioural difficulties. The school has achieved a number of awards including the Healthy School, Activemark and Eco Schools Awards.

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

1

Main findings

William Cobbett provides a good education. 'The school feels like an extension of our family really' is how one parent described how she felt about the school and inspectors endorsed this comment. The school prides itself on the very high quality of care given to pupils. As a result, pupils feel very safe in school and know that, should an incident arise, there is always someone to resolve the problem. Safeguarding and child protection arrangements are rigorous and all staff pay careful attention to the needs of pupils, particularly those who are more vulnerable. Pupils are happy and they have developed outstanding personal and social skills. Progress is good. Academic standards are above average, and particularly high in English and science. Standards in mathematics are lower and pupils make slower, though satisfactory, progress in this subject. Overall, pupils achieve well and the school is rapidly improving.

Since the last inspection the accommodation has been improved with the addition of four new classrooms. Staff have created a delightful learning environment in which every child is valued for the unique contribution they make to the school. Teachers use resources such as interactive whiteboards to introduce their lessons and capture the interest of pupils. Teaching is good. Senior leaders use a range of sophisticated techniques to monitor the work of the school and have taken very effective steps to develop teachers' skills. There is also some very skilled teaching by higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs) who provide excellent support to pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, there is still some variation between classes in the way assessment is used and in the quality of teaching. For example, in some classes pupils are given a clear understanding of what they are trying to learn and how they can improve ' through discussion in lessons, through their targets and through the marking teachers do ' but this is not consistent across the school.

The curriculum is exciting with an imaginative range of experiences to engage pupils' interest and enthusiasm. It capitalises on opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of different cultures, faiths and beliefs from other nations across the world, and makes learning relevant to pupils' lives and the local area. The curriculum is adjusted well to meet the needs of most groups. However, in mathematics the curriculum does not always match pupils' abilities well. As a result teachers sometimes miss opportunities to fully challenge pupils.

School leaders are ambitious and take decisive action to improve the quality of education. They are reflective and have an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school; strategies are already in place to address the comparative weakness in mathematics. They have worked hard and to very good effect to raise standards and ensure that all pupils successfully develop their personal, social and

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academic skills. As a result pupils are mature and confident and eager to help and support others. They value the 'buddy' system in which pupils from different year groups are paired off so that there is always someone in the playground to help. Integration of pupils from the special needs unit has been particularly successful in reinforcing the inclusive nature of the school. Teamwork is a strength of the school because leadership has created a climate in which every teacher is provided with opportunities to develop their own skills and talents. There is a great determination to improve at all levels. Staff and pupils are well supported by a governing body that provides a good balance of challenge and support. The school makes excellent use of partnerships to enhance provision and demonstrates outstanding capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make better use of all available assessment information, including teachers' marking, to identify more precisely the next steps in learning for all pupils.
- Raise standards and achievement in mathematics by ensuring that work is better matched to the needs of pupils.

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

Standards are significantly above average in English and science and they are above average in mathematics and this shows an improvement on the previous year. There is no difference between the progress made by boys and girls, those of different backgrounds and those of different abilities, including those who have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils make better progress in English than they do in mathematics. The quality of art and music is impressive. Pupils behave extremely well in lessons. They are very focused and expect to learn. They are very keen to volunteer answers and not afraid to make mistakes. They demonstrate good capability in information and communication technology (ICT), using it across a range of subjects. They thoroughly enjoy school, which is reflected in their good attendance.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of the need to make healthy choices during meal times. The Activemark and Healthy School awards reflect the very wide range of sports activities enjoyed by pupils. They look forward to participating in local events such as the carnival and singing to local elderly residents at Christmas. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They respond to appeals for fundraising from organisations such as the local hospice and they understand that there are people in the world who sometimes need additional help and support. The exceptional strengths in their personal development coupled with above average academic skills mean they have an excellent preparation for the future.

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.

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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	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?

Teachers use imaginative methods to capture pupils' interest and engage them in learning. For example, pupils in Year 5 produced some very high quality pictures using a variety of media to depict the natural world of bugs and trees. Pace is usually brisk and teachers and teaching assistants work together effectively. The excellent relationships between adults and pupils foster a climate of trust and respect and this encourages pupils to take an active part in lessons. Lessons are usually clearly planned with learning intentions that can be explained so pupils know what they are expected to learn, though this is not always effective in practice. In many lessons pupils are encouraged to reflect on what they have learned and to refer to their targets and this is enabling pupils to understand how well they are doing. Teachers mark pupils' work but sometimes comments do not provide enough information about how work can be improved.

The curriculum has strengths in its topic-based approach which allows learning to take place in an integrated way. Subjects such as art, music and religious education are planned to incorporate a multicultural dimension for pupils so they gain a deep understanding of the faiths, beliefs and cultures of the wider world beyond. For example they have visited the Hindu Temple in Watford to develop their understanding of Hinduism and in art they have made Indian masks. Parents and carers greatly appreciate the curriculum's breadth. One wrote, 'I would like to have been a pupil here myself!' There is a very wide range of extra-curricular activities including golf, chess and judo to increase pupils' enjoyment and contribute to their excellent personal development. The English curriculum is well planned to cater for pupils with a wide range of abilities. Occasionally there is insufficient challenge in mathematics for some

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pupils and this slows the progress they make.

The school prides itself on the outstanding level of care provided for pupils. It has provided additional accommodation and facilities to meet the requirements of pupils who have complex needs. For example, the school has built a soft play area and a sensory room to give opportunities for physical and sensory therapy to both stimulate and calm pupils in the SNSU. Pupils from the special unit are able to join the main school for appropriate activities such as playtimes and assemblies so they feel part of the whole school. They also integrate into mainstream classes for some lessons which meet their needs and they join in events such as sports day and extra-curricular activities. The school makes excellent use of partnerships with parents and external agencies to support pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable and this means that these pupils have access to a full range of resources to support their needs.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	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 driving force behind the school's success is a strong and highly effective leadership team led by a dedicated headteacher. Central to the school's vision is that all pupils regardless of background can and will succeed. The school's procedures for self-evaluation are rigorous and consequently the school has a very accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. All leaders and managers are involved in monitoring the work of the school and use the outcomes to plan professional development activities tailored to the needs of individual staff. This means that staff are fully up to date with new initiatives and can take action to improve standards and achievement for pupils. This has been particularly successful in raising standards in writing. The school prides itself on its inclusive ethos which permeates all aspects of school life. It consistently and imaginatively 'goes the extra mile' to enable full participation by every pupil. The school successfully promotes community cohesion through the well-planned curriculum and there are plans in place to develop this work further in partnership with local schools. Governors are committed and the governing body has a good balance of skills. Safeguarding procedures are robust and child protection arrangements are secure; all staff are provided with comprehensive training. The school provides excellent value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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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
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
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

The majority of the 86 questionnaires received were very positive. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and praise the quality of education and the care that pupils receive. A very small number of comments concerned safety in the school car park. Inspectors monitored pupils and cars entering and leaving the school site at the beginning of the second day but found no issues. The matter was discussed with the headteacher who reported that pedestrian access was through two side gates and not through the car park. Inspectors were satisfied with the actions taken by the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at William Cobbett Junior 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 86 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 376 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	58	36	42	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	53	62	33	38	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	39	45	45	52	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	43	41	48	5	6	3	3
The teaching is good at this school	47	55	36	42	1	1	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	52	36	42	1	1	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	48	42	49	2	2	1	1
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	50	31	36	6	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	40	43	50	3	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	33	45	52	6	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	34	43	52	6	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	52	36	42	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	59	34	40	1	1	0	0

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

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

Overall effectiveness of schools 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.



2 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of William Cobbett Junior School, Farnham, GU9 9ER

Thank you for making my colleagues and me feel so welcome when we visited your school. It was a pleasure to meet you all and to find out how well you are getting on at school. We listened to what you have to say about school and agree that it is a good school. We know that you work hard and enjoy the lessons your teachers prepare for you and we know you all enjoy the visits you make to the local area. We were impressed with the very wide range of clubs for you to attend before and after school. We liked the way in which you care for each other and enjoy the responsibilities that teachers give you.

Your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and to ensure that you reach high standards but there are two things that your teachers could do to help you to make even more progress. These are:

- Make teaching even better by making sure you know what you are expected to achieve and what your next steps in learning are. This could be through the way they mark your work. You can help by asking questions if you are not sure of these things.
- Make sure that you reach even higher standards in mathematics by planning lessons that challenge you and make you work hard.

We know that you will help to make your school even better by working hard, and wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Joy Considine

Lead Inspector

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