

Send CofE First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125285
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	340756
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Wendy Forbes

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Tony Shutt
Headteacher	Simon Hobbs
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. 15 lessons were observed and nine teachers were observed teaching. Inspectors visited all classrooms to sample displays, behaviour and resources, and held meetings with governors, staff and a group of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of school documentation including teachers' planning, pupils' work, the school improvement and curriculum plans, monitoring and evaluation records, assessment information, individual education plans, minutes of meetings, safety records, assessment information and the reports of the school improvement partner. They analysed 118 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, together with the school's own pupil questionnaires.

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

- the progress of pupils currently in Years 1 and 2, focusing on improvements in writing, particularly that of the most able
- the pupils knowledge about different cultures and how well the school promotes community cohesion
- the impact of improved tracking and assessment systems in raising attainment and sustaining achievement.

Information about the school

Send First is an average-sized infant school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average and includes pupils with speech and language and emotional and behavioural needs. The proportion known to be eligible for free schools meals is well below average. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language are well below average. On-site after-school child care is operated by the school. The school has achieved a number of awards, including Eco Schools, Healthy School and Working in Partnership with Parents.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Pupils enjoy attending and work hard. One child commented, 'It's lovely here; everyone is so friendly.' As a result of good teaching, curriculum and leadership and management, pupils achieve well. 'Staff at Send go the extra mile to make sure that our children are happy'; 'the school is just like one enormous happy family', are typical comments made by parents and carers. These positive views are shared by the vast majority of parents and carers who appreciate the caring environment where pupils feel extremely safe and enjoy learning. An already outstanding relationship between parents and carers and the school is enhanced by regular parenting courses provided by the school.

Pupils' good attitudes to school are reflected in their good behaviour and above-average attendance. The outstanding level of pastoral care, guidance and specific support provided particularly for those who find learning more difficult ensures pupils have a happy time at school, knowing that there is always someone to help them. Pupils make good contributions to the smooth running of the school and are involved in the wider community, putting on performances at a home for the elderly, for instance. These activities contribute to the school's satisfactory promotion of community cohesion, although there are some elements that are still to be developed, particularly pupils' understanding of what it is like to live in a different part of the United Kingdom.

Children enter the Nursery with levels of skills and understanding broadly typical for their age. Good provision means children have a happy start to school life and make good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. This good progress continues through the school, so that, by the end of Year 2, attainment is high in reading and above average in mathematics and writing and, overall, pupils make good progress. The school has worked hard to improve pupils' writing skills since the last inspection. Improvements are already obvious; however, fewer pupils achieve the higher Level 3 in writing compared to reading and mathematics. Overall, teaching is good and generally lessons are well planned. However, in a very small number of lessons, the pace is slower and opportunities are missed to develop learning skills, particularly those of the most able. The vast majority of pupils know how well they are doing. However, marking and feedback lacks consistency and, as a result, some pupils do not know how to improve their skills.

The improved systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work are used effectively to enable the headteacher, staff and governors to have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and set clear priorities for improvement. This has been a key factor in sustaining the overall effectiveness of the school since the last inspection and indicates that the school's capacity for sustained

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improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to raise attainment and accelerate progress in writing by ensuring that work set consistently challenges pupils, particularly the most able, so that outcomes reflect the exceptionally high standards already achieved in reading.
- Ensure that teachers' comments, when marking work or giving feedback to pupils, always indicate how the pupils can improve their work.
- Improve the promotion of community cohesion, so that pupils understand what life is like in a different and contrasting part of the United Kingdom.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

By the time pupils leave Year 2, their attainment is above average in writing and mathematics and high in reading. Their good number skills help them to solve problems in mathematics. They demonstrate good investigative skills in science and many use computers well to consolidate and extend their learning, particularly in mathematics. A strength in a number of lessons is the way that pupils support each other, for example as 'talk partners', a regular feature of the lessons observed. Pupils' above average achievement and obvious enjoyment is evident in their engagement, as was seen in a good Year 1 science lesson investigating 'How do we hear?' Pupils demonstrated good investigative skills, evaluating the relationship between distance and sound whilst working outside. It is such enjoyment of learning that contributes well to pupils' good progress and personal development. The exceptional support that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive ensures that they too learn and progress well throughout the school.

Pupils make good contributions to their school and wider community, enjoying opportunities as members of the school council to represent their peers, raising funds for charities and providing singing entertainment at local care homes or at lunchtime on the school's outdoor stage. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. Pupils' talents are valued as 'Stars of the Week' and opportunities to reflect on the needs of others are promoted well through the provision of a school 'Prayer Box'. Multicultural activities are encouraged and celebrated. However, pupils' knowledge of other people's lives in different parts of the United Kingdom is an area for development.

Pupils say they feel extremely safe. They have a clear understanding of why some foods are healthier than others and say they really enjoy the daily 'activate' exercises which start the school day, as well as 'Green travel' Fridays. It is these regular events and the many sports activities provided which help to promote a healthy lifestyle in a very practical way. Pupils' good academic skills and personal qualities prepare them well for later learning.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good subject knowledge and the skills to use different approaches to enhance lessons. Good use is made of a range of resources and equipment, such as interactive whiteboards and computers, to help make lessons fun and interesting. Generally, good use is made of partner and group work in lessons and pupils find this informative and helpful in forming ideas. Pupils say they enjoy lessons, especially when the work they are asked to complete offers them just the right level of challenge. However, in the very small number of lessons where teaching was satisfactory rather than good, the pace is slower and opportunities were missed to develop learning skills, particularly those of the most able.

Since the last inspection, the school has developed very effective assessment systems to track how well individual pupils are progressing and uses these well to monitor the progress of individuals. Teachers set targets for their pupils and their progress is monitored, which has helped towards the improvement in pupils' progress throughout the school. However, the lack of consistency in marking and feedback provided means that some pupils know what to improve but not always how to do so.

Teachers have embraced the creative changes in the school's good curriculum, making learning meaningful, frequently practical and providing captivating topics that maintain pupils' interest. The curriculum links different subjects together well, in order to ensure that learning is relevant, purposeful and enjoyable. However, some activities do not

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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always provide sufficient opportunities for more-able pupils to reach their full potential in writing. Pupils are enthusiastic about the interesting range of activities, enhanced well by visits and visitors to the school. Sports partnerships with a local specialist school and a good range of extra-curricular activities enrich and enhance learning.

For those for whom learning does not come easily, the school has developed a very personal approach, matching the curriculum and its content effectively to the needs of the individual. This is, additionally, supported well by strong inter-agency links, including the provision of a home–school link worker, all of which ensure that the needs of these pupils are very well met. Skilful teaching assistants play an invaluable role, often recording pupils' comments in class discussions and supporting those with special educational needs and/or disabilities very effectively. They are particularly good at rephrasing questions and at developing pupils' numeracy and literacy skills and ensure that the needs of these children are met very well.

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 very effective headteacher has a clear vision for improvement, which is communicated successfully to and shared by staff. Senior leaders know the school well and have accurately identified its strengths and weaknesses. With clear knowledge of its areas for development, senior leaders plan appropriately for improvement. They are supported well by knowledgeable, active and supportive governors, who, increasingly, challenge and monitor all aspects of the school's work. Subject leaders and other middle managers monitor the quality of target setting, planning, teaching and pupils' progress in an effective way. However, monitoring has not been so successful in identifying how marking and feedback to pupils could be improved. The school, successfully, promotes equal opportunities, does not discriminate and is very inclusive. Well-developed support systems within the school are complemented by a good range of partnerships with outside specialists to support those pupils with very specific needs and to provide learning and other opportunities for the pupils. Safeguarding arrangements are good and both staff and pupils say that they feel very safe and secure in school. Provision for community cohesion is satisfactory. Local links and those with other countries are developing well. However, pupils have insufficient understanding of the diversity of society in the United Kingdom.

Links with parents and carers are exceptional. Parents and carers are very appreciative

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of the way the school reaches out to them by, regularly, inviting them to share their views of the school's effectiveness and the efforts made to provide high-quality parenting groups. The school's website and developing virtual learning platform provide parents and carers with a myriad of information. Overall, this is a good school that is being driven forward by good leadership, the impact of which has ensured continuing improvements and has sustained its good capacity for future and further improvements.

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
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes. Displays and activities welcome children into a buzzing learning environment. It is no wonder that children, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress towards their Early Learning Goals. This is due to the consistently good provision, curriculum and teaching and exceptional pastoral care provided. Due to good leadership and management, children's needs are identified quickly. An outstanding partnership is formed quickly with parents and carers, who appreciate the endless patience and enthusiasm of staff. As one parent/carer commented, 'staff are kind and caring and know exactly what our children need.' Staff make learning fun and enjoyable and challenge children to think and work together. For instance, children were seen enjoying their learning thoroughly as their teacher, playing the part of Noah, described his imminent arrival. Working enthusiastically with 'talk partners', children discussed excitedly what Noah might need to build his ark and how large it might be. Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff provide good opportunities for children to make choices and to work indoors or outside, fostering their independence.

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Children are able to demonstrate how to stay safe and healthy.

Staff make useful observations of children's achievements, but do not always record routinely the 'next steps' to aim for. The curriculum is good and provides constant pleasure and excitement in children's learning and personal development. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the personal and learning needs of the children. This knowledge ensures that children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, demonstrating good behaviour for their age.

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

The parent and carer body is fully supportive of the school. Comments such as 'the school really listens to parents', 'a very warm, caring and nurturing environment', 'a lovely school where everyone is made to feel special', typify the responses from parents and carers. Parents and carers appreciate the workshops some staff organise to inform parents and carers about what their children are being taught and the regular opportunities to contribute their views to the school's development and feel that the school is well lead and managed. There were almost no negative responses. A very small number of individual concerns were fed back anonymously to the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Send Church of England First 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 118 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 205 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	86	73	32	27	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	98	83	19	16	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	79	67	36	31	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	75	64	42	36	0	0	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	88	75	29	25	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	80	68	35	30	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	81	69	36	31	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)	80	68	32	27	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	86	73	31	26	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	74	63	39	33	0	0	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	72	61	41	35	1	1	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	94	80	23	19	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	91	77	26	22	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



12 July 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Send Church of England First School, Send, GU23 7BS

I want to say thank you very much for the very warm welcome you gave all of us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed visiting your school very much and it was a real delight to talk to you and find out about all the exciting things you do and how well you learn. Yours is a good school.

Here are some of the highlights of your school:

- Most of you do very well at school especially in reading and enjoy your learning.
- You get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- You like making a difference to your school by the responsibilities you are given, especially raising money for others.
- You enjoy the many fun activities the school provides for you, especially the many school clubs, singing in the school choir and playing sport.
- You receive excellent care, guidance and support from your school and you all feel very safe.
- The governors, together with the headteacher and his staff, have worked hard to improve the school and want to make the school even better.

I have asked the school to find ways to make sure that those of you who sometimes find parts of literacy lessons a bit too easy are challenged to reach even higher standards in writing and to make sure you know how to get better in your work. I have also asked them to find ways of helping you to understand what it is like to live in another part of this country.

Once again, thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school and remember, you can help your school to get even better by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely,

Wendy Forbes

(Lead inspector)

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