



St Mary's CofE Voluntary Controlled Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125149
LEA Surrey LEA
Inspection number 281900
Inspection dates 12 July 2006 to 13 July 2006
Reporting inspector George Rayner AI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Shackleford Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Shackleford
Age range of pupils	4 to 7		Godalming GU8 6AE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01483 414749
Number on roll	59	Fax number	01483 414391
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Paul Francis
Date of previous inspection	7 February 2000	Headteacher	Miss Gillian Boreham

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 7	12 July 2006 - 13 July 2006	281900

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Much smaller than most others, this is a village school in a rural environment, but close to Guildford and Godalming. It draws its pupils from a wide and varied area. Pupils' socio-economic circumstances are generally advantaged. Standards on entry are above average, although the small numbers involved mean that these can fluctuate from year to year. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. The proportion from minority ethnic groups is also below average and no pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The school values its denominational nature and its links with the local parish church. It has Investors in People status.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school evaluates its overall effectiveness as good and the inspection has shown that this is an accurate judgement. The very positive questionnaire responses of parents and carers show that they share this view. Quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are very good. The school provides good value for money.

Pupils achieve very well and reach standards that are well above average by the end of Year 2. Good teaching that ensures that activities are well matched to the ages of pupils and provides carefully for the needs of all, contributes strongly to their achievement. Personal development is good, because pupils respond well to the encouragement given to them to be independent, responsible learners. Pupils do not have a sufficient understanding of the cultural differences, ways of life and beliefs found in Britain and the wider world.

The curriculum has good breadth and balance. Pupils are very appreciative of the good enrichment provided by visits, although there are few clubs available. When information and communication technology (ICT) is available, it is used well but resources are not always available and this hampers pupils' progress. The school is highly committed to the care of its pupils and this is outstanding. The strength of academic monitoring, guidance and support is an important factor in pupils' achievement.

The school is well led and managed. Very clear leadership by the headteacher and committed teamwork by staff and governors have been important factors in the school's success in maintaining high standards. Consequently, improvement since the last inspection and capacity for further improvement are both very good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend resources for ICT, so that pupils have more opportunities to use them to enhance their learning.
- Ensure that provision is effective in increasing pupils' understanding of cultural diversity.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve very well in meeting challenging targets to reach standards that are well above average. In the Reception class, activities very well pitched to the way that young children learn ensure that they make very good progress towards all of their learning goals. Their particularly good social development is shown in the way in which they work together in groups, sharing tasks and helping each other.

In 2005, pupils reached exceptional standards by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. The standards of current Year 2 pupils are a little lower, particularly in the proportion who reach higher levels in writing. However, evidence of their starting points and targets show that their achievement is good. Teaching that is well matched

to the needs of all is an important factor in pupils' achievement. This ensures that no group makes less progress than the others. Careful identification of the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities ensures that most attain average standards. However, shortages of resources hamper pupils' progress in ICT.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Several parents commented upon how happy their children are at the school and how confident they have become. Pupils say emphatically that they enjoy school and show this by their good attendance and willingness to join in. The great majority show very good moral understanding through their excellent behaviour. In a discussion, some pupils showed strong spiritual qualities in their understanding of the few pupils who find it more difficult to behave and concentrate. They appreciate the way teachers deal sensitively with any whose behaviour slips.

The current Foundation Stage pupils have very good social development and work together co-operatively. A group of boys, working on a joint building task shared their ideas and used this to improve their designs. Pupils enjoy taking part in celebrations in the parish church and understand why this is important. Although the school provides opportunities to learn about the ways of life in distant places and the cultural diversity of Britain, pupils do not have a sufficient understanding of them.

Pupils know why exercise and healthy diets are important and why it is essential to take care when in the sun. Some admit to not always following all the advice given. The recently established school council is providing an effective voice. Pupils are proud that their ideas for improved seating in the playground and a Tidy Ted award for the tidiest classroom have led to improvements. Pupils care for their environment and volunteer willingly to tend plants. They contribute to events in aid of charity, for example The Cherry Trees organisation that cares for children with physical difficulties. Pupils have a good grasp of most skills which contribute to their future economic well-being, through the progress that they make in key areas of learning and through learning to work co-operatively.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall. In the Foundation Stage, work is very well planned to provide a variety of activities that encourage children to learn by play and exploration. A strong emphasis on encouraging children to learn to be independent has a considerable impact upon their social development. This was seen when a group of girls worked on an interactive whiteboard, organising themselves very well to ensure all had a fair share of the resource.

In all years, teaching provides effectively for the needs of all pupils, to ensure support, challenge and good progress. Good use is made of assessment to build upon previous learning. Very good teamwork between teachers and support assistants, to which parent volunteers often contribute, ensures that pupils are monitored when working individually and receive any additional help that they need. Teachers question effectively to check how well pupils are learning. Very good relationships encourage pupils to often ask their own questions and to check and extend their own learning. Occasionally, teaching is not assertive enough in setting clear expectations, so that pupils do not understand for example, the need to put their hands up if they wish to contribute to discussions.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has good breadth and balance. It ensures that pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. In addition to all the required areas, pupils in Years 1 and 2 take French and swimming. Considerable progress has been made in enhancing the science curriculum by adding enjoyable activities, with good links to other subjects. Provision for ICT is not as good as other subjects and this hampers some aspects of pupils' learning. For example, when pupils were able to use the interactive whiteboard, it contributed significantly to their independence and collaborative learning, but this resource is insufficiently available. The curriculum provides well for pupils' social development, through a well organised and regularly reviewed programme. The school provides a good range of visits to enrich learning. Some pupils spoke with great enthusiasm about their enjoyment and what they learned on a recent trip to the London Aquarium. Currently, the only club is football. Pupils would welcome more, but it is difficult for such a small school to provide these. It is investigating how it might offer more in partnership with other schools.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care for its pupils. It has a high commitment to their care and security and makes full use of its small size to offer what one parent called, 'A warm and supportive community.' All procedures for ensuring safety and child protection are conscientiously and systematically carried out. Accidents are rare and when they do occur, causes are carefully analysed so that they can be avoided in the future. Key staff are trained in first aid.

Information about pupils' progress is carefully gathered. Its very effective use to set targets for pupils, to monitor and guide them towards these and provide additional support where necessary, are key factors in promoting pupils' achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher is dedicated to the school and its pupils and her leadership is characterised by a determination that high standards will be maintained. She is well supported by a very cohesive staff team, who share her vision and commitment. Their responsibilities are clearly identified and shared equitably. The effective working of the team is based upon shared willingness and productive personal relationships rather than formal structures. This works well in a school of this size.

Monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher, local authority consultants and governors is systematic and rigorous. The school has recognised a need to build up the skills of subject co-ordinators, so that they can contribute and provide feedback and improvement planning more closely matched to what is needed in each subject. With the help of local authority consultants, it is moving forward well on this. The school regularly consults parents for their views. Since the establishment of the school council, pupils have had an effective means of regularly giving their views. Overall, the school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and the areas in which it could improve further and has used this self evaluation well to maintain its high standards.

The contribution and effectiveness of the governing body has significantly improved since the last inspection. Governors have benefited from effective training and now play a prominent and well organised role in monitoring the school's provision and performance.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Pupils

Thank you for welcoming me to your school recently. I really enjoyed my visit. I was able to see that yours is a good school and some things are very good indeed. You do very well in all of your work. An important reason is that your teachers are good. They think carefully about what each of you needs, so that everybody has work that helps them to succeed. They help you to work together and not to need telling what to do all the time. The teachers and learning assistants work together very well to make sure everybody gets extra help if they need it. I also saw some of your parents helping and this is very valuable to the school.

You help your teachers very much and this is an important reason why you do so well. Some of you told me that you really enjoy coming to school. All of you show this by coming to school regularly, behaving excellently and being willing to join in. It was good to see children helping out in other ways, like watering the plants and coming up with good ideas on the school council. The ideas for more benches outside and the Tidy Ted competition have helped the school to be even better.

Some of your parents and other grown ups at home told me they think that the school takes extremely good care of you and I could see that this is true. The headteacher and staff care very much for you and work very hard to make the school a lovely, safe place where everybody can do well. I think there are two ways in which they could make the school even better. The first is to provide more computers and interactive whiteboards. I saw these being used really well, but classes cannot always use them when they need them. The second is to help you to learn more about all the different cultures in Britain and the world.

Very well done to you all.

George Rayner

Lead Inspector