



Meath Green Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125012
Local Authority Surrey
Inspection number 293165
Inspection dates 5–6 March 2007
Reporting inspector David Marshall

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Greenfields Road
School category	Community		Horley
Age range of pupils	7–11		RH6 8HW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01293 784298
Number on roll (school)	357	Fax number	01293 822359
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Michael Ledwich
		Headteacher	Mrs Alison Hilton-Childs
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Meath Green is a very large junior school. Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds, both social and educational. The influence of the nearby Gatwick airport is significant in terms of short-term, well paid occupations and pupils' mobility. Most pupils come from a nearby infant school, however over 20% of the intake comes from three other local infant schools with varied catchment areas. The level of pupils with learning difficulties is higher than the national average. Most pupils are of White British heritage, and very few come from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Meath Green is a good school. The inspection findings agree with the school's judgement that they provide an effective education for their pupils. The supportive atmosphere for learning created through the very well planned curriculum and the very good quality of pastoral care, ensures that pupils achieve well. Pupils' standards are consistently in-line with expected levels for their age by Year 6. The school's extensive tracking data confirms that this represents good progress during their time in the school.

Teaching and learning are good, and occasionally outstanding. Observations and assessments of what the pupils know and can do are collected well and shared with all concerned. The information gained is used well to plan lessons but the use of individual targets to challenge pupils and to move them on to the next stage in their learning is inconsistent. The meetings held by year group staff to discuss their planning, and pupils' interests are thorough and incisive. As a result teachers are clear about the most effective ways to ensure that activities are interesting and inclusive. The comprehensive tracking information collected is used particularly well to ensure that the least able pupils make good progress. This is achieved by providing good quality help from very well qualified teaching assistants wherever it is needed. However, the most able pupils are not always given work that challenges them to get to very high standards and therefore many make only satisfactory progress.

A key feature of the school is its drive to provide an outstanding climate for learning. This is secure, and the very good standard of pupils' personal development and well-being helps provide a good platform for future learning. The staff's careful planning also means that pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. A further noteworthy feature is the way in which staff constantly look for ways to make sure that all pupils enjoy their learning. They recognise, however, that they now need to focus more strongly on developing pupils' skills by giving them appropriate targets for improvement that they know and understand.

Pupils are cared for very well and all of them, including the most vulnerable, are safe and secure. The curriculum is exciting, covers all subjects very well and is enhanced by an outstanding range of additional activities. The head teacher provides first-rate leadership. She is very ably supported by the senior leadership team and all staff and developments are driven forward at a good pace. Strengths and weaknesses are speedily identified because the school has good systems for monitoring its work. Teamwork is excellent. The school has continued to improve from the strong position at the time of the last inspection and their capacity to continue to improve is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use the school's assessment systems to provide pupils with challenging targets for improvement.
- Ensure that the teachers focus on improving the performance of the most able pupils with the same degree of rigour as they do for the less able.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are average by the end of Year 6 and achievement is good. Due to the effective organisation, based on thorough, early assessments, pupils begin to make good progress immediately. National test results in Year 6 in 2006 were similar to those in 2005, and, were in line with the school's own carefully formulated targets. Progress is good throughout the school due to the rigorous system in place that tracks the progress each pupil makes and identifies where additional teaching will be most beneficial. Evidence in pupils' books and other work shows they achieve well across a wide range of subjects. Standards in music, art, design technology and physical education improve well as the very good curriculum gives many opportunities for pupils to develop their creative, sporting and musical talents. Standards are good in information and communication technology (ICT) as teachers use the new ICT facilities very effectively. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They are very well supported by the very experienced support staff and have access to a curriculum that helps them all to achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They have affection for their school and feel, 'All of our teachers are very supportive and help us with our work'. Parents, too, are pleased that their children enjoy school. The vast majority of pupils work and play happily together and show real enthusiasm for their lessons. A few pupils sometimes behave selfishly but such behaviour is not common. Attendance is satisfactory, and better in winter than summer when family holidays can interrupt the attendance of pupils. Pupils are polite and respectful and their social and moral development is good. Through a range of experiences pupils gain a good insight into other peoples' cultures and values. They have good awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and have developed sensible attitudes to safety. Pupils carry out a wide range of responsibilities with pride. The school council is greatly respected and is involved in school improvement projects. Equally strong is the sense of involvement pupils feel with the wider community, for example, the help they give with the wildlife projects in Emelyn Meadows, a woodland area within the BAA Gatwick Greenspace initiative.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and so pupils enjoy their lessons and make good progress. Some lessons are outstanding, especially where teachers' subject knowledge is very good and activities are lively and well planned. In the best lessons, work is well

matched to pupils' previous attainment and behaviour is managed well. Tasks are interesting, involve pupils well and they have a clear idea of what they should learn. However, work is not always as carefully organised so that all ability groups within the class are fully challenged. In particular, pupils of higher ability often make just satisfactory progress. Teachers use interactive white boards well to provide good quality illustrations and this leads to lively well paced lessons and good class discussions. On the rare occasions when teaching and learning is only satisfactory, it is often because the pace of the lesson slows and pupils become distracted. Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs by a comprehensive network of help from well trained teaching assistants. This promotes a sense of security so they make progress equal to their peers. In English and mathematics, marking is regular and supportive but does not always give clear guidance about how pupils can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and provides the pupils with an excellent range of activities and additional learning experiences where clear planning allows subjects to interlink successfully. For example, an exciting salsa lesson for the whole of Year 6 in the hall included well planned elements of science, music, geography and dance. French is offered for all year groups and the number and extent of extra-curricular activities are a strength. Pupils especially enjoy their environmental studies in the school vegetable garden or learning about wildlife in woodland areas nearby. They enjoy many opportunities for sport and physical exercise and learn about healthy living and how to keep safe in science and physical education. In English the focus on improving writing skills is consistently applied with good results in creative writing. Visitors to the school support the curriculum in a wide range of areas. Cultural and spiritual development are well focused and the Social Emotional Aspects to Learning project (SEAL) lessons each week provide a valuable medium for pupils to explore social and emotional issues. This contributes to their developing confidence and self awareness.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's care for pupils is good and staff provide a warm, friendly and supportive environment where lots of praise enables everyone to learn. Pupils are happy and feel secure. One boy said, 'Everyone here is kind and helpful'. Pupils are very confident that they will be well looked after and always have someone to talk to. There are outstanding procedures for child protection. Aggressive behaviour does occur at times but is dealt with well. Some parents expressed concerns but supervision at playtimes is good. It is low-key, thorough with lots of fun activities, and works well. Links with outside agencies are very good. The progress of children with special education needs is carefully tracked and they are well supported. Individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties have been revised so that pupils are very much more involved in assessing and planning their future progress. Although the use of assessment

information to track progress is clear and comprehensive it is not consistently and effectively used to enable all pupils to see how they can improve their work. The setting of targets is not consistent. Mostly targets are discussed informally with pupils so they are not always clear about what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Teamwork is of a very good quality and everyone plays a part in moving the school forward. The very experienced head teacher's leadership is excellent. All staff follow her lead and are very good role models in their own right. One of the key roles of all staff is to follow the head teacher's exemplary lead and relate effectively with all pupils, parents and the local community. As a result, the partnership with parents is good. In particular, the Friends of the School Association provides unstinting support and is a real asset.

There is a clear understanding of strengths of the school and areas that need more development. The school's self evaluation is effective. The school improvement plan provides clear guidance on relevant issues for raising standards and takes into consideration support and initiatives from all sources. Governors provide good support as they act as critical friends, challenging decisions and requesting explanations where this is necessary.

The school has good links with other schools and organisations to give pupils every possible opportunity. Management at all levels is good, with effective systems in place to monitor pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning. Within the school, there is a high commitment to include all pupils in all activities and the care and concern for all pupils is high priority. Parents value this and see it as an important feature of the school.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to thank you all for making us so welcome when we came to the school recently. We really enjoyed our time with you and you all helped by being so friendly and sensible. I thought you would like to know what we found out.

I agree with what so many of you told us; Meath Green is a good school. When you arrive at the school adults help you to settle in really well. You develop your English, mathematics and science skills well. By the time you go to secondary school you are well prepared. We were pleased that you like school and come regularly. Most of you seem to really enjoy your lessons, work hard and behave well. There are many interesting things for you to do in the school, in the clubs and on the visits that you make. Those of you who do not find work easy do really well because of all the help you get.

Your teachers work hard to help you to do as well as you can. We think it would help you to improve if you each had clear targets and so we have asked them to talk to you about these. We have also asked them to make sure they set you work that is challenging, particularly for those of you who often find work quite easy.

Finally, we would like to thank you once again for all your help, and wish you well in the future.

Yours faithfully

David Marshall,

Lead Inspector