

Horley Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124981
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	328255
Inspection dates	25–26 February 2009
Reporting inspector	David Whatson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	221
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ralph Collett
Headteacher	Mrs Hilary Salter
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lumley Road Horley RH6 7JF
Telephone number	01293 782263
Fax number	01293 822425

Age group	5–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Horley Infant School is a popular school. The school provides for 88 children in the Reception classes of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much lower than is normally found. Most pupils are of a White British heritage. The proportions of pupils from different minority ethnic groups, or learning English as an additional language, are broadly similar to those found elsewhere. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and of those with statements of special educational needs, many of whom have moderate learning difficulties, are much lower than in other schools. The school hosts the 'Sunrise' and 'Sunset' before and after school clubs for its pupils. In 2007 the school gained the Healthy Schools Award and in 2008 they received the International Schools Award, the Eco Schools Green Flag Award and the Activemark. The privately run Bobtails Playgroup is located within the school grounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Horley Infant School is a good school. The views of two parents echoed those of many others when they wrote, 'It is a little community that my child loves' and, 'It is a remarkable school which helps all children to develop to their best potential both academically and socially. I would recommend it to other parents.'

The quality of pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding. This contributes to both their enjoyment of school and their eagerness to learn, and makes a positive contribution to pupils' progress. High-quality care and support are central to the school's nurturing ethos. Because of this, as one parent wrote, the school 'feels like one big happy family'. Pupils feel very safe and know that the adults will help them if they have a problem. Pupils readily adopt safe practices and their behaviour is excellent. They eat healthily and relish the fruit at break times. Pupils speak maturely about the school rules and how they love it when they come together in assembly. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time at school. This is shown in their good attendance. Pupils have a very good understanding of diversity and marvel at the beauty of the world. Many pupils make a difference to others within the school community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.

All pupils, irrespective of their starting points and capabilities, including those learning English as an additional language, make good progress. Pupils' achievements in their basic skills and their excellent personal development mean that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Standards at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics have been rising over the last few years and in 2008 they were above the national average. They were higher in reading and mathematics than in writing. The more able boys achieved well, but not well enough to reach the higher standards that girls achieved in writing. School assessments indicate that standards are on track to improve further, particularly in writing and for boys. This is because the school has correctly identified the need to provide a wider range of writing experiences and styles.

Since the last inspection, close monitoring and targeted support and training, especially in the teaching of writing, have successfully developed classroom practice so that teaching and learning are predominantly good. However, the school is aware that teachers do not always use the beginning or end of a lesson to challenge pupils and involve them in assessing their own learning. This means that in these lessons pupils make less progress than they should.

Carefully chosen and interesting topics make learning stimulating and relevant and support pupils' learning and personal development well. In most subjects pupils' progress is carefully monitored and tracked. Pupils, including those with moderate learning difficulties, receive a high level of individual support from all adults.

Before and after school care clubs securely meet the welfare, learning and development requirements and pupils are happy, engaged and well behaved.

At the heart of this positive picture is the clear educational direction set by the headteacher, enthusiastically supported by the senior leadership team. Together they are firmly focused on nurturing each and every pupil and implementing well-considered new initiatives to raise achievement in the school. Through challenging targets and focused planning, some of these are beginning to have an impact. They have an accurate and honest view of the school and their capacity to make further improvement is good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter school with skills and knowledge on a par with most other children of their age. They make good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage and at the end of their Reception Year children's development is above national expectations, except in their writing which is broadly as expected. Excellent links with the onsite playgroup promote easy transition to the main school. Children settle in quickly and they feel safe and at ease with teachers and other children because of the warm and very caring welcome they are given. Parents are very appreciative of the priority given to developing children's personal development. By the beginning of Year 1 children's personal development is particularly good. Children are interested and eager to join in with the exciting range of indoor and outdoor activities on offer. Teaching is good but on a few occasions, especially at the start and end of a lesson, teachers do not always challenge children and extend their learning. Teachers carefully assess children's overall development in Reception and then regularly throughout the year to inform the next stages of learning. This is used well to plan activities for children of different abilities and provide those who need it with additional support. The new Early Years Foundation Stage leader is beginning to develop an in-depth knowledge of children's progress across the Reception classes and the overall effectiveness of the provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, especially of the more able boys, by extending the range of writing experiences and styles.
- Increase the rate of progress in lessons by asking teachers to use more challenging questions at the beginning and end of lessons and involve pupils more closely in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Given their starting points and capabilities, pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Since 2006, standards have been rising and in 2008 they were above the national average. The school's own assessments indicate that this trend is likely to continue. Over the last few years standards in reading and mathematics have been higher than in writing, where they are close to the national average. This is because although the more able boys achieved well, unlike the girls, too few of them achieve the higher levels. To address this, the school has enhanced the curriculum and provided additional staff training. As a result, standards have risen, and are on track to improve further and narrow the performance gap between boys and girls. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with moderate learning difficulties, make good progress because of the high levels of individual support they receive. Pupils at the early stages of learning English make fast gains in fluency because of the sharp focus on communication.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils at Horley Infants feel extremely well loved, safe and nurtured and as a result they quickly grow in confidence, independence and self-esteem. Their conversations are respectful and enquiring and they really enjoy their work. Pupils show a maturity beyond their years in their relationships with one another and with adults. Pupils take responsibility for their actions and

understand the difference between right and wrong. They thoroughly enjoy coming together for assemblies where they develop a strong sense of community. The school council has had a positive impact on enhancing the school environment and, through the eco-committee pupils, have a very good idea about recycling and how to look after the planet. Pupils respect cultural diversity and speak knowledgeably about schooling in Germany, Spain and Lesotho. Pupils are very kind and caring to one another. Their behaviour in lessons and at playtime is excellent. They readily adopt safe practices and have a very good understanding of the school rules and how they should behave. Pupils eagerly adopt healthy lifestyles, understand the benefits of eating well, and greatly enjoy the sporting and creative facilities provided in the playground.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils are well motivated to learn because classrooms are bright and cheerful, and because of the warmth and concern teachers and support staff show for each of them. Lessons are often fun, interesting and practical. In the words of one pupil, 'We have fun while we work. For me the fun thing is when you talk and make things.' In most cases teachers have high expectations, as shown by how well they plan for pupils of different abilities. Sometimes, however, teachers do not use challenging questions at the start or end of a lesson to extend pupils' learning or involve them in assessing their own work.

Marking is regular and pupils benefit from verbal feedback in lessons that help them to improve. The use of 'next steps' cards in writing have been effective in helping pupils identify what they need to do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The social and emotional aspects of learning strongly underpin the school curriculum and are given a very high profile. The curriculum is carefully planned so that themes, such as expressing emotions and why it is so important to look after the planet, are woven carefully through well-chosen topics. Some, such as those on superheroes and castles, have been particularly chosen to interest boys and this has had a positive impact on their writing. There is a good focus on the basic skills and more writing opportunities are being developed. An interesting range of visits supports pupils' development well. Visitors, such as the Crown Prince of Lesotho, make a significant impact on pupils' learning and development. Pupils develop their talents further when at the 'Sunset Club' and in a broad range of other clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Adults, including those in the 'Sunrise Club', care for and know the pupils exceptionally well. All legal safeguarding requirements are met. The school rigorously encourages good attendance and tenaciously pursues persistent absentees. The consistent application of the school's behaviour policy, the very good role models provided by adults and the very firm approach taken to eliminate harassment and discrimination support pupils' personal development very well. Vulnerable pupils are identified early and an effective range of interventions, including good liaison with external providers, ensures they make good progress. All pupils and their parents are kept well informed about their progress. Clear targets are set for pupils' next steps

in learning in literacy, but targets are not as well developed for mathematics. Academic tracking in key areas such as literacy, numeracy, science, and information and communication technology is comprehensive. Similar approaches are being developed in other subjects. However, these elaborate systems in their current paper-based form are very time-consuming to complete and analyse.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school places the care and welfare of its pupils at its heart, but does not forget the need to ensure that they also achieve well and reach high standards. Since the last inspection, the headteacher and staff team have worked hard to provide all pupils with effective opportunities to flourish both personally and academically. The processes by which the school monitors its effectiveness are well embedded. Leaders and managers have an accurate grasp of the school's strengths and know well where development is required. However, as the criteria used to measure the school improvement are not always sharply focused on outcomes, it is sometimes difficult to measure their impact. The school is addressing this. The school is rightly proud of its efforts to maintain an inclusive ethos, reflected in pupils' good progress. The school has looked carefully at how it develops pupils' understanding of other communities, both globally and nationally. Governors are reflective about how they work as a team and challenge and support the school well. There is a strong partnership with external support agencies, which has enabled the school to help successfully not only its pupils but also their families, promoting their sense of belonging within the local community.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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 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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

10 March 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Horley Infant School, Horley, RH6 7JF

Thank you for welcoming us and for talking to us about your school. It was very useful to listen to what you had to say about what you enjoy doing.

Your parents and carers think that your school is a good place to learn and we agree with them.

Here are some of the things we particularly liked about your school.

- You learn well so that by the time you go to the junior school, you can read, write and do mathematics often at the standard expected for children of your age.
- All of the grown-ups look after you very well and this helps you to feel safe and happy in school.
- You know which foods are good for you and you like doing lots of exercise in school.
- Your teachers give you interesting things to do and this helps you to enjoy learning.
- You behave very well in lessons and in the playground.

Your headteacher has lots of good plans to make your school even better. In order to help with this, we have asked her and the teachers and governors to do two things.

- Give you a wider range of things to write about so that standards in writing improve, especially for boys.
- Ask teachers to ask you more difficult questions at the beginning and end of lessons and also involve you more closely in your learning.

You can help by always doing your best and making sure that you always come to school unless you are poorly.

We hope that you will keep enjoying school.

Yours faithfully

David Whatson

Lead Inspector