

Chalk Ridge Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116057
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326320
Inspection dates	9-10 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Susan Gadd (HMI)

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

Type of School	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	398
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Colin Davies
Headteacher	Miss Donna Shave
Date of previous school inspection	23 November 2005
School address	Sullivan Road Brighton Hill Basingstoke Hampshire RG22 4ER
Telephone number	01256 461733
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Chalk Ridge is a larger than average sized primary school. A small proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minorities and that of pupils whose first language is not English are both low, although the numbers are increasing. The school has a lower than average proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Provision for extended care is made through an independent organisation named 'Jack-in-a-Box'. This group provides care for pupils after school and during the school holidays.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Chalk Ridge Primary is a good school. It welcomes children from a wide range of backgrounds and is successful at including all children in the full range of school life. Pupils work hard and cooperate well with one another. The majority of parents are overwhelmingly positive about the impact of the work carried out by the staff and headteacher. One parent stated, 'The teaching staff and the headteacher go above and beyond expectations to provide my son and me with the support we need.'

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has steered the school successfully through a difficult period of turbulence involving staff changes, and has ensured that these changes have had a minimal impact on pupil achievement. The school is fully aware of the concerns that some parents have expressed about these changes. The headteacher and her new management team have a good understanding of the areas for future improvement. Managers at all levels are committed to ensuring that pupils are happy and succeed in their learning.

Children enter the school with attainment that is broadly in line with that expected for their age, except in communication, language and literacy, where it is below. They settle well and make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage due to the good teaching and enriched curriculum. This good progress is maintained, and by the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average. Pupils make increasingly good progress as they move through Key Stage 2. Unvalidated data in Key Stage 2 for 2008 suggest that standards overall are above average. They are average in English and significantly above in mathematics and science. A whole-school focus on improving writing is contributing to rising standards in English. However, the school recognises the need to further raise standards in writing for the more-able pupils.

Teaching and learning are good. Tasks are matched well to pupils' needs, and the teaching is clearly focused so that pupils know what they have to learn. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust within the classroom. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace, and teachers' questioning leads to good learning. Teaching assistants provide the pupils with good support. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, not enough challenge is provided to ensure that more-able pupils achieve the higher levels, and on rare occasions low-level disruptive behaviour occurs. This behaviour is generally dealt with quickly and effectively, and behaviour overall is satisfactory. Through the questionnaire a minority of parents expressed concerns in this area, and the school is addressing these isolated occurrences. As one parent stated, 'The headteacher is fantastic at dealing with children that have problems. She has dealt with them tactfully and efficiently. Her door is always open for both parent and child.'

The satisfactory curriculum offered to pupils is broad and balanced. Since the last inspection the curriculum has been reviewed in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. This has resulted in increased opportunities for learning through play and investigative work in the Foundation Stage. There are plenty of opportunities for children to write in a meaningful context. These models of good practice enable pupils to become confident and independent learners who work within a stimulating learning environment. However, this is not consistent across the whole school. A range of clubs are available to pupils, and the school is exploring ways in which to further develop enrichment activities, including making more trips available to pupils.

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are good. They have a positive impact on pupils' personal development and well-being, which is also good. Pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic learners, and this is reflected in their above average attendance. The school sends out information through their newsletter, although some parents have expressed a desire for more communication about school matters and their children's learning. Pupils have an excellent understanding about how to stay healthy and safe.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The good-quality provision in the Foundation Stage has improved considerably because of effective leadership and management. This has resulted in consistently good teaching, enabling children to enjoy their learning in an attractive and exciting indoor learning environment. There are plenty of opportunities for the children to initiate activities and make choices. However, the outdoor area is less stimulating, although plans are in place to further improve this aspect of provision. All children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, benefit from the good quality of teaching and effective support. This gives children confidence and encourages them to succeed. This is particularly the case for children with speech and language issues and moderate learning difficulties. Children enter school with skills that are broadly in line with expectations for their age, except in communication, language and literacy, which are below that expected. They make good progress, and by the end of the Reception Year the majority of children are working at or beyond levels expected for their age. Imaginative and exciting learning opportunities are carefully planned to promote writing activities and to stimulate children's curiosity and desire to learn. Year 1 teachers are beginning to incorporate elements of the Foundation Stage curriculum into their lessons to ease the transition from the early years to a more formal curriculum. There are plans to develop this further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further raise standards for the most-able pupils, particularly in writing.
- Ensure that strategies for promoting good behaviour are consistently used.
- Develop the curriculum across the whole school to reflect the strengths already seen in the Early Years Foundation Stage in relation to pupils' independent learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

By the time children enter Year 1, they have acquired a good grasp of the basic skills which enable them to continue to make expected progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in writing and reach above average standards in this area, while overall standards remain broadly average. The unvalidated data for 2008, and inspection evidence, show that standards have risen so that by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' standards are now above average. Overall achievement is good.

In the last two years the school has focused on improving writing. The impact of this work is evident from the improved writing results, in particular in Key Stage 1. The good progress in writing that pupils make is due to the rigorous monitoring and targeted support given to groups of pupils and individuals. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make good progress because of the very effective support they receive. Those whose first language is not English are well catered for. More-able pupils are beginning to achieve more in line with their potential in mathematics and science, although the school recognises the need to further raise achievement in writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being, together with pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils are given good opportunities in weekly class assemblies and circle time to reflect on issues of importance to them. They are increasingly learning about other cultures, for example through their foreign language day and when

parents share their multicultural experiences with the pupils. They have an excellent understanding about how to stay healthy and safe. Year 4 pupils lead 'huff and puff' sessions, and all pupils participate in the morning exercise routine. They enjoy school, and this is reflected in their above average attendance. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. Although pupils say that behaviour is good, inspectors noted restlessness in some lessons where the degree of challenge was not sufficient. The pupils are beginning to talk about rights and responsibilities, although the school acknowledges that this is in the early stages of development. They contribute well to their school community through the school council and the buddy system. Year 6 pupils speak highly of the opportunity they have as 'Making a Difference' monitors, when they help out around the school. Outside the school they have links with a senior citizen's home at harvest festival time, but links with other institutions at local, national and international levels are limited. Exercises such as electing school councillors and having to apply in writing for the position of librarian, together with the good standards in basic skills, contribute well towards the future economic well-being of pupils.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils are taught well, and as a result make good progress. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations, and pace is good, maintaining pupils' interest and involvement in their learning. Teachers create a purposeful working atmosphere where pupils understand what they are expected to achieve, enjoy their learning, and work hard. However, this good practice is not always consistent across the school. In a few lessons pupils are not always sufficiently challenged, which can lead to instances of low-level disruptive behaviour. Across the school, relationships are good and pupils' attitudes to work are positive. Resources are well prepared to enhance learning, and teachers use interactive whiteboards particularly well to interest and engage pupils. Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a valuable contribution by supporting learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those learning English as an additional language, make as much progress as others because of a good balance between interventions during lessons and targeted support outside the classroom. Pupils' written work in English is marked well, showing not only their successes but also how they could improve their work, though this is not yet consistent in other subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The majority of pupils enjoy their education, and the curriculum contributes well to their personal development. The school has been involved in a recent review of the humanities. As a result, development in this area is focusing on introducing a greater range of problem-solving skills, more opportunities for independent learning, and a creative learning environment. While these changes to the curriculum are embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage, they have yet to be introduced across the whole school. Team planning and regular monitoring has helped to ensure that some good links exist between subjects. The teaching of French by a subject specialist from a local secondary school enriches the curriculum further. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to attend a residential visit. The majority of older pupils participate in a range of after-school activities. However, parents and pupils feel that opportunities to enrich the curriculum through school trips and greater links with the community need further development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pupils are well known by the staff and receive good care, and say they feel safe and secure. Parents agree, and one parent wrote that 'My son is happy at school, likes going every day and is learning well.' The school has effective systems for safeguarding pupils. Risk assessments are comprehensive. The school evaluates the care and support of its

most vulnerable pupils well, making good use of outside agencies. Arrangements to monitor the progress of pupils are very good, leading to effective actions being taken where necessary. Pupils' work is assessed regularly, although the quality of this is inconsistent between subjects. The best practice is seen in English. Pupils say that the 'two stars and a wish' strategy in English helps them understand what they need to do to improve their work. There are good arrangements in place to transfer information as appropriate between classes, and when pupils move to other schools.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The leadership provided by the headteacher and her management team is strong and provides clear direction and purpose. The school's self-evaluation is good. Initiatives are monitored carefully, and actions are taken to bring about necessary improvements. For example, the recent decline in English has now been reversed. The headteacher knows her school very well and is passionate about moving it towards excellence. Constant focus on pupils' personal development and academic achievement underpins the school's work. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. Governors are beginning to hold the school to account in the area of achievement and standards. They are committed to its success and are supportive of the work of the staff. They ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements, and that finances are managed efficiently. Nevertheless, they do not always question independently enough the impact of the school's work on pupils' progress. The school leaders are not complacent, and there is a good capacity to improve further.

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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 is the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are the children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

² IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

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 interest of learners?	3
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?	3
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	3
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



Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

24 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chalk Ridge Primary School, Hampshire, RG22 4ER

You may remember that three inspectors visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you, your teachers, and everyone else who works in the school. Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming - you made our visit very enjoyable.

Your school provides you with a good standard of education.

These are the best things about your school.

- It is a very happy place, where you enjoy your lessons and get on well with each other.
- You know how to keep safe and healthy, and you enjoy taking lots of exercise.
- Your teachers make most of your lessons interesting and help you to enjoy your learning.
- You make good progress in your work and you reach above-average standards.
- The school is well led by your headteacher and her team. They want the very best for you, and are determined that you should make as much progress as you can in lessons.

To make it even better, we have asked your school to make these three improvements:

- help those of you who are more able to do better in writing
- make sure that your behaviour is always good
- improve the curriculum across the whole school so that learning is exciting, and you can work more independently and be involved in more problem-solving activities.

You can also help to make your school even better by always trying your best in lessons and by telling your teachers what you think of the changes they are making.

Thank you again for being so friendly and helpful to us.

Yours faithfully

Susan Gadd
Her Majesty's Inspector