

Ghyllgrove Community Infant School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	114919
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	378960
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2012
Lead inspector	David Jones HMI

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ken Howard
Headteacher	Jean Clark
Date of previous school inspection	25 January 2011
School address	The Gore Basildon SS14 2BY
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Age group	4–7
Inspection date(s)	8–9 February 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Jones

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kelly Stock

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed nine teachers deliver 15 lessons; they observed group reading sessions, intervention groups, registrations and an assembly. Inspectors visited a number of whole-class reading sessions as part of a joint observation programme with senior staff, and heard a range of individuals read. Inspectors held informal discussions with groups of pupils and met with members of the governing body, staff, and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, and observed the school's work. The team looked at the school's most recent self-evaluation and a recent local authority review. Inspectors scrutinised 44 parental questionnaires and evaluated the pupil and staff questionnaires.

Information about the school

Ghyllgrove Infants is smaller than the average primary school and the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is average, although the proportion who speak English as an additional language is below the national figure. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average; the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is twice the national figure. As part of the school's effective provision for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, the school has developed a nurture centre, 'The Arc', to support the increasing proportion of those with multiple learning and behavioural difficulties.

The school was given a notice to improve in January 2011 and received a monitoring visit from HMI in September 2011. Four teachers and two support staff were appointed in September 2011; four members of the governing body have been appointed since September 2010.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.
- This is now a satisfactory school where achievement is satisfactory and improving as a result of an increase in the proportion of good teaching available.
- Behaviour is good and the pupils' attitudes to learning and their respect for one another and the teaching staff are clearly evident. The school's high expectations and effective communication with parents are the key factors. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance has improved and is in line with the national average. Consistent follow up and family support have been important to the improvements secured.
- Good teamwork is emerging between learning support staff and class teachers. Assessment for learning, the quality of marking and the accuracy of level-related assessment have been well managed by senior staff. The leadership team have done well to enhance teaching and raise standards.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall. Nearly half of the teaching observed during the inspection was judged to be good. Where teaching needs to be stronger variations in the match of tasks to the pupils' learning needs require greater consistency. Good teaching in the nurture centre helps these vulnerable pupils make good progress.
- The leadership team has worked hard to secure important improvements in teaching, achievement, attendance and behaviour. Further improvements are required in literacy and numeracy, and a higher proportion of good teaching is needed before Ghyllgrove Infants meets the inspection criteria for a good school.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Secure consistently effective teaching by:
 - monitoring the match of tasks and the continuity of curriculum challenge to ensure the pupils' learning needs are met effectively in all year groups.
 - ensuring that phonics are more effectively embedded and revisited within in Reception and Year 1 to help raise standards of reading further.
- Ensure the progress evident in the pupils' books translates into improved outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the Key Stage 1 Teacher Assessment by enhancing speaking and listening opportunities in every lesson.
- Provide opportunities for all teachers to observe and emulate the most effective practice in the school.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Attainment is below average but rising. Pupils at all levels and of all ages are making satisfactory and in some instances good progress as a direct result of the improvements in teaching secured since September 2011. A recent local authority moderation exercise found that the school's assessment of pupils' achievement was consistently accurate. Following a scrutiny of the pupils' work and the school's assessment database, HMI concur with this view. Pupils are making solid progress from a low starting point.

Children now make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils were observed making good progress in the Nursery class as a result of good teaching that maintained a strong literacy theme across the range of activities provided. The pupils' communication, language and literacy skills are well below average on entry but, as a result of a new focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills, the range of activities provided is helping to raise standards.

Pupils' attainment in reading has improved significantly since the previous inspection and it is in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. The improvements secured in the quality of teaching in Year 2 provide opportunities for pupils to read aloud in all lessons. The impact of intervention group work is clearly documented. Inspectors heard pupils read and found that the lower-ability pupils were progressing as well as their peers and vulnerable pupils were making good progress.

Pupils of all abilities, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory and often good progress. Effective provision is helping pupils with a statement of special educational needs, and those receiving support from the school and other agencies, to make good progress. The small numbers of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds progress as well as others. Those pupils who speak other languages at home make good progress in learning English. Responses by parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire were positive

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regarding the progress their children are making.

Solid planning has helped improve the curriculum in all year groups. However, progress is stronger in 'The Ark' and in Year 2 where the curriculum challenge has greater consistency.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching observed reflects the improvements noted in the school's monitoring of provision and that noted in the January 2012 external assessment. Scrutiny of the pupils' books confirms the improvements secured in teaching since September 2011; the progress the pupils make is clearly satisfactory and increasingly good and the teachers' assessment of the National Curriculum levels attained are accurate.

In the best lessons, tasks are well planned, questioning is skilful and learning is driven forward at a brisk pace by precise instruction. Class teachers and the learning support assistants are a skilful team that maintain a challenging dialogue with pupils. The use of assessment and the quality of marking evident in the pupils' books are notable features of these lessons.

Strong teaching has evolved rapidly since September. Inspectors observed effective registration routines in the Nursery and story time became a vibrant narration of a favourite story, developed with actions and with the children offering new words and descriptions of what might come next.

In those lessons where pupils make only satisfactory progress, tasks are not always linked sufficiently well to prior learning. For example, in two Year 1 science lessons the task was not sufficiently developed from previous work on the human body and instead pupils moved to a copying task on 'the jobs people do'. In some lessons, the pace and challenge provided are limited and too much time is given for pupils to complete simple tasks. Some phonic-based 'letters and sounds' sessions miss opportunities to revisit and consolidate the pupils' learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

In all lessons, behaviour management is skilful and staff expectations are high. As a result, the courtesies pupils use when speaking to their peers is often of a high order. The pupils listen respectfully in class and enjoy discussions with their 'talk partners'; these positive attitudes to learning are the result of effective efforts to enhance the pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils say they feel safe and they understand potential dangers. They report that any incidents of bullying are rare and dealt with quickly and effectively by staff. Pupils like coming to school. As a result of considerable effort by the school, attendance rose significantly in the autumn term to a point which, if maintained, would be close to the average for infant schools nationally. The school's high expectations of every aspect of the pupils' behaviour and the support provided for families whose circumstances make them more vulnerable has been at the heart of the progress made since the last

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inspection.

Leadership and management

Senior staff have done well to manage the school's development from the notice to improve given at the last inspection. Staffing has been strengthened and the improvements secured in the quality of teaching are having a clearly documented impact on pupils' achievement. The headteacher and her deputy joined inspectors in the monitoring of teaching, and the views they expressed matched the judgements given by the inspection team. The regular monitoring of provision by senior staff has provided an effective structure for staff training and the guidance of less experienced colleagues. Equality of access and the absence of discrimination in any form is strength of the school. Governance is notably stronger, with four new appointments to the governing body since September 2011.

Parents and carers express confidence in the senior team and acknowledge the improvements secured. Assemblies celebrate the pupils' successes and consistently develop spiritual and moral themes, the latter being effectively linked to the school's high expectations. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.

In conjunction with the efforts made to enhance teaching, the successes secured in improving behaviour, the pupils' attitudes to learning and the parents' and carers' attitudes to school have been vital to the improvements in achievement now evident. As a result of these efforts, the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments are good. The curriculum is satisfactory and notable improvements have been secured. The cultural focus that was absent at the time of the last inspection has been effectively addressed. Pupils enjoy their introduction to French and the work focused on the Chinese New Year produced positive literacy and numeracy opportunities. A team of middle leaders is making a growing impact as coordinators of provision.

Much has been achieved since the last inspection: good behaviour, an increasing proportion of good teaching and notable improvements in the pupils' achievement. The school's capacity to improve further is good.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



10 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ghyllgrove Community Infant School, Basildon, SS14 2BY

It was a real pleasure to visit your school just before half term. You made me and the other inspector very welcome and gave us a wave each time we came into your classroom. Thank you!

Your school needed some support last year and the headteacher and her team have worked very hard to improve your school. You know what your teachers expect and you work hard. Well done! Behaviour is good and attendance is improving rapidly, but you can help by coming to school as often as possible. Your parents and carers told us they have a lot of respect for the staff who lead the school and they are pleased with your progress.

I have asked the headteacher to make sure that all of your lessons keep you busy and supported so that your literacy and numeracy skills improve.

It has been a real pleasure to meet you all.

Yours sincerely

David Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector

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