

# Ardleigh Green Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102271
<b>Local Authority</b>	Havering
<b>Inspection number</b>	355162
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mary Summers

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	270
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Barabara Selton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Cheryl Woodey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 December 2007
<b>School address</b>	Ardleigh Green Road Hornchurch, Essex Hornchurch RM11 2SP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01708 449362
<b>Fax number</b>	01708 448832
<b>Email address</b>	office@agi.havering.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 14 lessons and nine teachers. They met with parents and carers, governors, members of staff and pupils, looked at a range of school policies and plans, records of pupils' progress, and analysed questionnaires returned by staff and pupils and the 136 questionnaires submitted by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- Are pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities making enough progress in lessons?
- How effectively is the school promoting community cohesion through the curriculum?
- Are pupils developing secure computer skills and how well are computers used in lessons to support their learning in other subjects?

## Information about the school

Ardleigh Green is larger than most infant schools. Most of the pupils who attend come from the immediate locality. The large majority are from White British backgrounds. Few pupils come from homes where English is not the first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average as is the proportion identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. Many of these pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties. The school shares its site with the neighbouring junior school, with which it has established a family centre, in partnership with the local college. The school has won a large number of awards in recent years, including the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Healthy Schools status.

**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: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

This is an outstanding school where pupils make excellent progress in all aspects of their development. Staff have a clear and unswerving focus on ensuring that all pupils, whatever their needs or abilities, reach the highest possible levels in literacy and numeracy, and develop into confident and articulate youngsters ready to take full advantage of their future education.

Pupils' attainment is high and their achievement is excellent. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress as well as their peers because of the close attention paid to tailoring the curriculum to their needs and the extremely high quality of support offered through catch-up sessions. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in lessons and around the school and makes a considerable contribution to their rapid progress. They thoroughly enjoy their education and this is borne out by their above-average attendance and high levels of participation in class. Their very positive 'can do' attitudes to learning stem from their teachers and other adults who work hard to plan lessons that build methodically on previous learning and recognise and value each step achieved. Teachers and assistants have an extensive knowledge of every pupil and act speedily if any fail to meet the minimum expectations during lessons.

Pastoral care is outstanding. One parent, expressing the views of many, wrote, 'The excellent progress my child is making is down to the wonderful teachers and teaching assistants and their compassion, encouragement and drive.' Pupils feel comfortable in sharing any concerns they might have and the atmosphere is so positive they are confident to attempt new learning and learn from their mistakes.

Senior leaders have a clear understanding of what is working well and what needs to improve. They identified, for instance, that in the recent national assessments in writing, fewer pupils than usual reached the higher Level 3. Concerted action has been taken to address this throughout the school, for example by focusing more on extending pupils' opportunities to speak about their ideas before writing about them.

Children settle quickly into Reception classes because of the extremely well-organised induction programme and the very warm welcome that they receive from adults. Although they make good progress over the year, it is not as rapid as in Years 1 and 2. Some strengths and areas for development have been identified in curriculum provision, for example in the outdoor area, but plans lack enough clarity and sharpness to secure fast enough improvement.

Since the last inspection, the high standards of pupils' attainment have been maintained. Nonetheless, senior leaders are not complacent and have firm plans to address areas they have identified as needing further improvement. This strong commitment, together with the calm, effective leadership of the headteacher and excellent support from the whole

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school community, mean that the school is extremely well placed to continue to improve in the future.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Plan more rigorously for improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with clear and measureable success criteria and a tighter focus on the time span for improvements.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

Children's skills vary considerably when they start in Reception but, overall, are a little below levels typical for their age. Overall they make excellent progress and, when they leave at the end of Year 2, virtually all pupils reach nationally expected levels for their age. About twice as many pupils as in most infant schools reach the higher Level 3 in the national assessments, even though recent performance in writing was not as strong as previously. Girls and boys achieve extremely well.

Pupils demonstrate their high level of enjoyment by the determined way in which they apply themselves in lessons. They work successfully individually, in pairs and in small groups. In a mathematics lesson in Year 1, for example, pupils talked excitedly about the value of different coins. They shared their ideas thoughtfully and, with the teacher's extremely skilful questioning, they were able to understand that the largest coins did not always have the highest value. The school's focus on developing speaking and listening skills helps all pupils, but especially those who have speech, language and communication difficulties. Pupils whose home language is not English benefit from effective modelling of tasks and language by teachers and assistants, and make excellent progress.

Pupils feel very safe in school. They are extremely well supervised and say they are confident to approach any of their teachers or helpers if they have a problem. They learn how to keep safe outside school too, for example by taking great care when using electrical items or the internet. Through the work done to gain Healthy Schools status, pupils learned about the importance of healthy lifestyles and most adopt them. They make a very strong contribution to the school community through their work as school councillors and monitors but fewer opportunities exist for them to take an active role in the wider community. ♦ Pupils have a good understanding of different cultures and beliefs and a very keen sense of right and wrong. One pupil noted that the school's 'kind hands and kind feet' policy helped her when playing with her brothers and sisters at home. Spirituality is strong. Year 2 pupils reflected sensitively about Remembrance Day, one writing, 'Every family has someone who died in a war.'

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Pupils enjoy a wide range of interesting activities and experiences through the curriculum. They learn about a wide range of cultures and faiths which contributes to the good levels of community cohesion within the school. They enjoyed the performance of a visiting theatre company for example, which helped them understand about Diwali and learn about the Hindu faith. There is a strong focus on ensuring that every child gains a solid foundation in literacy and numeracy. These skills are taught in an extremely methodical way which ensures that pupils have a really secure knowledge and understanding of each step before moving on to the next. They enjoy learning about famous people and events in the past, for example, Guy Fawkes, and designing simple playground maps to learn early geography skills. The standard of artwork is very high, with pupils painting sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh and sketching trees, showing excellent technique and a real eye for detail. Information and communication technology skills are developing well, with pupils receiving specific skills lessons and having opportunities to use computers in class to support their learning in other subjects. However, with only two computers in each classroom, these opportunities are not as frequent as they might be.

Outstanding teaching is the main reason why pupils progress so well at Ardleigh Green. Teachers have wonderful relationships with pupils, which make for a really warm ethos in classrooms and a clear focus on learning. Pupils rarely stray off task but, if they do, a quiet word or even a raised eyebrow brings them back on track. Activities in lessons are

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set at different levels so that pupils receive the right level of challenge. These are based on extremely accurate ongoing assessment which identifies pupils capable of moving on to higher level work and those who need consolidation or further support. Teaching assistants are very well deployed and make a significant contribution to pupils' excellent progress in lessons and in catch-up groups. In a Year 1 class, for example, the assistant sat on the floor, close to pupils who needed support, while the teacher taught the lesson. The assistant encouraged the pupils to rehearse their answers with her so they could raise their hands and take a full part in the class discussion. Teachers often spend their lunchtimes and planning time helping pupils who need extra support with basic skills.

All adults provide excellent levels of care for pupils in and out of lessons. Pupils are known well as individuals and adults are quick to notice if any have a problem or concern. Prompt action follows, whether to reassure or to organise extra support if necessary. Staff work extremely well with outside agencies, for example, the speech and language service, to ensure that their recommendations are followed up in school. The school places few pupils on the special educational needs register because it believes that 'first quality' teaching should meet the needs of most pupils in class. They are extremely successful in meeting these aims but also in providing high-quality support for those pupils who have more significant needs.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and transmits her high expectations clearly but sensitively to all members of the school community. Staff form a very strong team who support the headteacher and work hard to ensure that high standards are maintained and that the school continues to improve.

There are excellent procedures to ensure that pupils are safe in school. Safeguarding policies and practices are clearly understood, regularly reviewed and carried out to the letter. Staff are properly trained in safeguarding and new staff checked carefully to ensure their suitability. Governors play an important role in this, visiting the school regularly to check on the effectiveness of the safeguarding policy, and carry out health and safety audits to the premises. Staff promote equality of opportunity very well and there are no differences in the attainment of progress of different groups. Racist incidents are extremely rare, but procedures are in place to ensure that any that arise are tackled promptly.

Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding. Parents receive good levels of information about how to support their children at home and are active partners in their

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children's learning. They raise considerable funds through the parent teacher association which are used to support visits and other aspects of the curriculum. Excellent links also exist with the neighbouring junior school. Staff work closely together to develop the curriculum, formulate joint policies and ensure an extremely smooth transition from Year 2. ♦

Governors are supportive and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They attend meetings regularly to discuss school performance and the school improvement group plays an active role in monitoring progress towards targets. They have recently implemented a system to link individual governors with classes to improve their understanding of pupils' progress and provision throughout the school. Governors and school leaders have completed a thorough audit of the school community and have developed links with a school in Uganda which is helping pupils understand what life is like for children in different circumstances. Plans are in place to promote community cohesion even more strongly through strengthening links with the local and wider United Kingdom communities.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle in quickly to Reception classes and begin to develop their confidence and independence. The atmosphere is warm and inviting and this means that children come into school happily each morning, ready to engage in all the activities provided for them. Parents and carers are very pleased with provision, and particularly appreciate the changes to the premises to make classrooms more accessible to them. One described this as a 'simple but very inspired' improvement.



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Pupils make good progress in Reception and the majority of children reach nationally expected levels by the time they transfer to Year 1. The development of literacy and mathematical skills begins as soon as children start school. Children gain a secure foundation of letter sounds and names during daily phonics sessions and have a wide range of opportunities to practise these during independent and group activities.

There is a good balance between activities that are directed by adults and those that children choose for themselves. Adults model language well for the children, helping them to increase their vocabulary and communication skills. Children particularly enjoyed pointing out the mistakes made by a puppet, which helped them to consolidate their understanding of the correct way to form individual letters.

Leadership and management are good. There is a good focus on keeping children safe and secure. Children's progress is tracked carefully and those who need extra challenge or support are highlighted. Very strong links with pre-schools in the area mean that teachers have a good view of children's development before they start school. This is further extended by meetings with parents to seek more detailed information about their children. Some elements of provision have been identified for further improvement, for example the outdoor area, to extend the opportunities offered to support children's learning in different ways. However, development plans are not detailed or clear enough to ensure that improvements happen quickly and have a real impact on children's experience and learning.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are extremely positive about all aspects of the school's work. They agree that their children enjoy school, that children are kept safe and that parents and carers receive good information about their children's progress. They are very happy about the teaching and that the school helps them to support their children effectively at home. Many parents expressed their strong support by speaking to inspectors in the playground and by writing comments on questionnaires such as, 'a fantastic school,' 'excellent progress,' 'exceptional' and 'one of the best in Havering and maybe the UK'. Parents' and carers' views are similar to those held by inspectors.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ardleigh Green Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 136 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 270 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	103	76	31	23	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	109	80	26	19	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	90	66	43	32	2	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	100	74	33	24	2	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	110	81	25	18	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	111	82	24	18	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	90	66	45	33	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	88	65	39	29	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	101	74	30	22	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	99	68	37	27	1	1	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	71	52	53	39	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	109	80	25	18	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	114	84	20	15	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**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.**



18 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Ardleigh Green Infant School, Hornchurch RM11 2SP**

Thank you so much for welcoming us recently and telling us your opinions about your school. Your views, along with everything else that we saw, helped us to form a clear view about how well your school works. You go to an outstanding school and these are some of the important things we found out about it.

- All the adults take really good care of you and help you if you have any problems or if you need to catch up with your work.
- You progress very well and reach high levels in literacy and numeracy because the teaching is excellent.
- You always look out for each other and offer help if it is needed.
- Your behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school.
- You work very hard in lessons and always try to do your best.
- The children in Reception settle into school quickly and enjoy all the activities organised for them.
- The people in charge are doing a great job in helping the school become even better.

Although things are working really well, we have asked your teachers to make sure that they plan more carefully for improvement in the Reception classes, so that the children there can make even faster progress.

You can all play your part in helping your school to become even better by making sure you continue to work hard, behave well and attend school every day.

Yours sincerely

Mary Summers

Lead inspector

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