

Chigwell Row Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114825
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	357628
Inspection dates	18–19 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Selwyn Ward

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	5–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Glen Gatty
Headteacher	Stephen Hale
Date of previous school inspection	21 February 2008
School address	Lambourne Road Chigwell, Essex IG7 6EZ
Telephone number	020 85003355
Fax number	0208 5012672
Email address	admin@chigwellrow.essex.sch.uk

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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. One was in the school for half a day, looking principally at arrangements for pupils' welfare and safeguarding. The other inspector was in the school for two days. He visited 12 lessons and phonics sessions, where pupils are taught letter combinations and the sounds they make. These included sessions taught by each of the three teachers as well as by teaching assistants. Inspectors spoke with staff, parents and carers, representatives of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work, the analysis of the tracking of pupils' progress, school policies and procedures, school leaders' monitoring records, notes of governing body meetings, school development planning and risk assessments. They also analysed the questionnaires received from staff and from 36 parents and carers.

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

- How effective have leaders and the governing body been in tackling the issues from the last inspection?
- What is teaching typically like in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and what has been identified by school leaders as needed to accelerate pupils' learning?
- How effective is the governing body in ensuring that all statutory requirements are fully met?

Information about the school

This is a small school. The large majority of pupils are White British, with others coming from a range of different minority ethnic backgrounds. A very small number of pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities fluctuates from year to year. It is currently above average, but in previous years it has been below average. The school has an Activemark award. Of the three class teachers, two have been in post less than a year, and the other is at the start of her second year at the school.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Chigwell Row Infant School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Children are happy in school and the good arrangements for their care and welfare ensure that they rapidly grow in confidence and self-esteem. As a parent explained, 'All of the staff are friendly and approachable and go out of their way to help the children. My child loves coming to school and feels safe and well looked after.' Pupils' enjoyment of school is evident in their above average rate of attendance. Pupils of different backgrounds get on very well together, so that the school functions as a friendly, harmonious community. Behaviour is good throughout the school and pupils are excited to learn and to benefit from a curriculum that gives them many memorable experiences, such as the regular visits to the forest school and the opportunity for all Year 1 pupils to learn horse-riding.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory rather than good because pupils have not been pushed to capitalise fully on the good start they get in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Attainment at the end of the Reception Year has been consistently above average but it varies more widely in the assessments at the end of Year 2. It was above average in 2009 but only average in 2010. Pupils are currently working at levels that suggest they are on track to reach above average standards in writing. This reflects the good feedback that pupils are given on their writing through teachers' marking. Although several good lessons were seen during the inspection, with pupils making good progress, progress in Key Stage 1 is uneven. Albeit less markedly so than at the time of the last inspection, progress has nonetheless been adversely affected by staff changes. Leaders' monitoring has identified that work is not always matched closely enough to pupils' different abilities. This remains a weakness of some lessons, however, because there have not been systematic arrangements to follow-up points for improvement by checking on them specifically in subsequent lesson observations or in scrutiny of pupils' work. Teaching assistants and other adults are often utilised well to support teachers and, in some cases, to lead lessons or parts of lessons. There are occasions, however, during lesson introductions and summaries at the end of a lesson, when they become passive observers.

The last inspection report identified that the governing body was not doing enough to hold the school to account for its performance. The governing body now regularly reviews school policies and procedures, but it is still not driving school improvement because it is not involved enough in school self-evaluation. That the school's self-evaluation is broadly accurate is due almost entirely to the headteacher. The governing body approves the priorities set out in the school development plan but it does not equip itself to use this as a tool for measuring the school's performance. This is because the school development plan incorporates few quantifiable success criteria. The school has demonstrated satisfactory capacity for improvement. Although some of the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report remain, the school can point to much success since that time in improved provision, raised attainment and pupils' notably stronger personal

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development. As the rise in the number of pupils on roll attests, the introduction of a regular weekly newsletter and other initiatives have resulted in a huge improvement in parents' and carers' confidence in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that, by the summer term 2011, pupils' learning and progress in lessons is accelerated through:
 - always setting work that is matched to pupils' different capabilities, especially to challenge and extend more able pupils
 - ensuring that learning support staff are actively deployed during periods of whole-class teaching.
- By the autumn term 2011, increase the effectiveness of management arrangements by:
 - following up in subsequent observations the points for development identified by school leaders when they visit lessons and examine pupils' books
 - ensuring that the governing body sets measurable success criteria in the school development plan and uses them directly to monitor the school's performance.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Progress in Years 1 and 2 has been uneven. As a result, attainment by the end of Year 2 has varied. Pupils make faster progress in writing than in reading and mathematics. The focus on letters and sounds has had a positive impact on writing. In one of the sessions observed, able pupils made rapid progress in recognising the spelling rules that apply to verbs when putting them in the past tense. There was slower progress in a session where lower attaining pupils were reciting letter combination sounds in chorus, because some pupils were making errors that went uncorrected. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers.

Their walks together to lessons in the forest have given pupils a keen sense of how to keep safe. Pupils also understand the importance of exercise and a healthy diet. The take-up rate for school meals has shot up to 75% since the school opened its own kitchen for cooked lunches. Parents and carers have noticed the difference. One parent told of how her daughter 'loves her school dinners and is trying food she wouldn't at home for me'. Older pupils help the younger ones and all pupils greatly prize the certificates to be won as a class 'star of the week'. There is a shared joy in each other's achievements as pupils enthusiastically applaud their classmates when their names are announced in assembly. They also enjoy visiting and learning about the places of worship of different faiths and the opportunities they have to raise funds for charity, including by dressing in spotted outfits for Children In Need.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

The good relationships that teachers have with pupils set the tone for the friendly atmosphere that permeates this school. Pupils quickly learn and follow the school's orderly routines and most are keen to volunteer answers to teachers' questions. The opportunities that even the youngest pupils have to express their views help them to develop as confident speakers. Teachers' marking often gives pupils helpful guidance on how to improve their work, especially in writing; Year 2 pupils refer to it as showing them the 'next steps' in their learning. Teachers do not always make such effective use of their assessment of pupils' progress when they plan lessons. Even when pupils of different abilities are given different work to do, the activities are not always pitched at the right level. In a lesson on counting using coins, several pupils described the activity they were given as 'easy, peasy' and then went on to demonstrate that they could complete the task without going through the laborious stages with which they had been tasked.

Chigwell Row Infant School provides many exciting experiences for the children. Through its partnership with the Woodland Trust, its forest school initiative gives pupils in all three classes regular lessons out in Hainault Forest, which is just over the road from the school site. This provides what parents and carers describe as 'a marvellous teaching environment' which adds an extra dimension to lessons across the entire curriculum, including physical education, science and design technology. Pupils have used video

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cameras to make some impressive films, including a showcasing of the school through Year 1 pupils' interviews with the headteacher, staff and older pupils.

Robust systems for monitoring and chasing up absences have led to improved rates of attendance, now above average. Pupils who need extra help with their learning benefit from generally well-targeted support. Those learning English as an additional language, for example, are helped to join in fully with all activities. Staff are rigorous in looking out for any welfare or healthy and safety concerns. All, for example, are made aware of the specific needs of pupils with allergies or medical conditions.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has succeeded in motivating the staff team so that they share a passion to improve provision and outcomes for the pupils. As a result, pupils are much more settled in school and their behaviour and confidence have improved. Partnerships, including those with parents, have been strengthened, and, since the last inspection, leaders have succeeded in improving both the curriculum and the arrangements for pupils' care, guidance and support. However, achievement remains satisfactory because pupils' progress has been uneven in Key Stage 1. Monitoring of teaching and learning has not been rigorous enough in following up points for development to ensure that teachers take on board the feedback they are given on lessons. That there is still variability over the extent to which more able pupils are challenged limits equality of opportunity, despite the school's success in otherwise tackling any disadvantage or discrimination that particular groups might have, for example, because of language barriers.

In many respects, community cohesion is a strength. Pupils from different social and ethnic backgrounds mix and get on very well together. They take a keen interest in different beliefs and ways of life in the local area as well as in the wider world. Community cohesion is satisfactory rather than good because its effectiveness has not been evaluated by the governing body. With the exception of this statutory duty, the governing body ensures that statutory requirements are met. It has recently reorganised the way it works to give it a clearer picture of what happens in school. It has taken a particular lead in reviewing and confirming that all safeguarding requirements are fully met. A notable feature of safeguarding at Chigwell Row Infant School is the way in which the pupils are actively engaged in considering and assessing risk, for example, on their trips to the forest school.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

'My daughter loves school and her teachers. She has learnt so much in the short time she has been there.' This comment from a parent sums up the views of many who wrote to praise the start that their children get in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children join the Reception Year with skills and capabilities that are at least in line with those expected for their ages. Their social skills and abilities in counting are especially strong. They make good progress to build on these skills so that most meet and many exceed all the early learning goals expected of children by the end of the Reception Year. Children benefit from a stimulating mix of activities led by adults and those that they choose for themselves inside the classroom and in the outdoor area. They make good progress as a result both of more formal teaching, for example of phonics, and the many opportunities that they have to learn through play. Children share and co-operate well with each other, often playing interactively and readily taking turns. They listen carefully to their teacher and other adults and, mostly, to each other's contributions in lessons.

The provision is well run, with recent initiatives extending its success. The partnership with parents has been strengthened this year, for example, through the introduction of home visits before children start school. These have added to the information available to staff from the various pre-schools that the children have attended. They have given staff a clearer picture of what children can do and enabled them to better tailor learning opportunities to meet each child's individual needs.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Questionnaires were returned by more than half of the parents and carers. Parents and carers voice positive views about every aspect of the school. They are especially pleased at the care taken of their children and at how much their children enjoy school. They also express particular appreciation of curriculum enrichments such as the forest school. Inspectors endorse these positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Chigwell Row 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 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 60 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	83	6	17	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	75	9	25	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	53	16	44	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	64	11	31	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	61	13	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	53	13	36	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	69	11	31	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)	12	33	17	47	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	56	15	42	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	50	16	44	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	39	17	47	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	15	42	20	56	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	64	13	36	0	0	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). 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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



22 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chigwell Row Infant School, Chigwell, IG7 6EZ

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when inspectors came to visit your school. Many of you told me how much you like school, and I could see why. Chigwell Row Infant gives you lots of interesting and exciting things to do. I enjoyed going to the forest school with Year 2. I didn't previously know how to spot a squirrel's drey, so I learnt something new too!

There are many good things about your school, including the arrangements for looking after you, and the way in which you all get on so well together. It was also pleasing to see such good behaviour and good attendance. Much about your school has improved since it was last inspected but inspectors have judged it to be satisfactory because you are not making such good progress over the course of Years 1 and 2 as you do in the Reception Year. I have therefore made some suggestions to help the school to build on the many things it does well so that your progress by the end of Year 2 is at least as good as it has been in Reception.

I have asked your teachers to make full use of the information that they have about how each of you is doing and make sure they always set you work that challenges and extends you. You can help with this by telling teachers when you find that what you are doing is too easy. I have also asked teachers to be sure that the other adults who help in class are as busy during introductions and at the end of lessons as they are when you are doing group work. Your headteacher and other staff visit each other's lessons to look out for ways of helping you make faster progress. I have asked that, when they spot things that could be better, they check later that improvements have been made. Just as you are given success criteria when teachers set out the learning objectives for each of your lessons, I have also asked the governing body to strengthen its role by setting clearer success criteria in the school development plan.

Thank you all again for welcoming me to your school, and my very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Selwyn Ward

Lead inspector

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