

Glebe Infant School and Unit for Hearing Impaired

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114889
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	357642
Inspection dates	14–15 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Mary Summers

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	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Trevor Rampley
Headteacher	Monica Dimmock
Date of previous school inspection	28 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 14 lessons which were taught by a total of nine teachers. They observed the school's work, and looked at documents associated with safeguarding procedures and self-evaluation. They examined data and information about pupils' progress and looked at samples of their work. They also scrutinised improvement plans as well as planning for lessons and the curriculum. Minutes from meetings held by the governing body and monitoring and evaluation reports written by senior leaders as well as the local authority were also examined. Inspectors took account of the views of pupils and of 22 members of staff who had completed questionnaires, as well as the content of 74 questionnaires that had been completed and returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What is the extent of pupils' achievement in writing?
- What is the extent of girls' achievement overall in the school?
- How effectively are teachers using assessment information to plan lessons that meet the different needs of pupils?
- How effective are the school's monitoring and evaluation processes in identifying strengths and weaknesses in school performance?

Information about the school

Most pupils who attend this smaller than average primary school come from the immediate area, although the pupils who attend the specially resourced provision for special educational needs (the hearing impaired unit) travel from further afield. The unit is managed by the school and caters at present for nine pupils, although it is able to admit up to 15. The overwhelming majority of pupils in the school are from White British backgrounds and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. An average proportion are identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities but more pupils than average have statements of special educational needs because of the unit for pupils who are deaf. The school has won a number of awards in recent years, including the Inclusion Quality mark and the Eco-schools award. Senior leaders, including the headteacher have had some unavoidable absence over the last nine months.

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

This school has recently been through a challenging period due to absences of senior leaders. The headteacher has returned recently and has quickly re-established her leadership position in the school. Systems to check on pupils' achievement and progress have been tightened and the roles of middle managers have been strengthened. Currently, the school is providing a satisfactory education for pupils.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. By the time they leave the school, their attainment is broadly average. Attainment is higher in mathematics than in reading and writing. The school is currently developing pupils' literacy skills through curriculum opportunities and by providing extra support for those who have fallen behind. Progress is satisfactory. Pupils who are deaf make good progress when they attend the specialist unit in the mornings and make satisfactory progress in their mainstream classes in the afternoons. This is because the unit is led and managed successfully and teaching is skilled and well matched to these pupils' needs. Overall their learning is satisfactory although their attainment varies considerably, depending on their capabilities. Pupils with other special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning to speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. However, although making satisfactory progress overall, these children and those who are more able do not always reach the levels they should in reading and writing because some activities set for them are not matched well enough to their abilities.

Satisfactory teaching that takes into account pupils' interests enables them to grow in confidence and develop good attitudes to learning. Pupils are well known as individuals and receive good levels of support and encouragement which helps them to feel safe and well cared for. They are well behaved in and out of lessons. They know what to do if bullying occurs, but they say this happens rarely. A stimulating curriculum in Years 1 and 2 engages pupils' interest and motivation and supports their personal and creative development well. Although provision in the Nursery and Reception Years is satisfactory overall and children make satisfactory progress, learning targets for some activities are sometimes not clear and measureable. Activities outside are not always stimulating enough to extend children's imagination and creativity and develop their literacy skills. Adults' interactions with children do not fully extend children's learning and accelerate their progress.

The headteacher has a satisfactory vision for the future and has effectively re-established her expectations about performance and outcomes with staff. Monitoring and evaluation are providing satisfactory information but processes are not organised systematically and so do not provide a fully detailed and accurate picture of overall provision. The governing body has limited involvement in evaluation. Improvement plans, while focusing on some of the key priorities, lack clear targets, actions, milestones and lines of accountability to

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secure rapid improvement. Nonetheless, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, especially in the way that science is taught, assessment information is analysed and the way in which the curriculum has been extended and enriched. These improvements, coupled with children's good personal development and satisfactory academic progress, show that there is satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement in reading and writing throughout the school by ensuring that assessment information is used effectively to plan activities that match pupils' individual needs more closely.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by July 2011 through:
 - planning activities more thoroughly to ensure there are clearer targets for children's learning
 - planning more stimulating activities in the outside area to extend children's imagination and creativity and support their literacy skills
 - improving the quality of adult interactions to accelerate children's progress.
- Improve leadership and management by July 2011 by:
 - establishing a clear cycle of monitoring and evaluation, involving senior and middle leaders and the governing body, to identify strengths and weaknesses in the school's performance
 - ensuring that improvement plans include measureable targets, actions, milestones by which to judge progress and establish clear accountability.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Children's skills vary considerably when they start in the nursery but are usually typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress throughout the school and their attainment is broadly average when they leave at the end of Year 2. Pupils learn effectively within the unit because of the high quality of teaching and the way the curriculum is adapted to their specific needs. Their learning is satisfactory in mainstream classes.

The school identified last year that attainment in literacy had dipped and has focused on addressing weaknesses in spelling and punctuation this year to try to reverse the trend. The work seen in pupils' books suggests that this is having a satisfactory impact. Pupils are keen to learn and apply themselves well in lessons. Girls and boys achieve satisfactorily and enjoy learning. Girls' attainment was lower than that of girls nationally last year but lesson observations and the school's tracking information show that this is not the case this year. Girls and boys in a Year 2 class made good progress in a literacy lesson in the computer suite, for example. Effective questioning from the teacher led to pupils working well individually to edit and refine their work. They developed their computer skills successfully and consolidated their phonic skills and knowledge. However, in some lessons, pupils' progress is hindered by lesson activities in reading and writing that do not challenge them fully or help them take the next steps in their learning.

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Pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and the vast majority adopt them. They make a good contribution to their own school community through their roles as 'eco-warriors', developed as part of the work done to gain the Eco schools award. Their average attendance and level of basic skills mean they are satisfactorily prepared for the future. Spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils gain a keen sense of the world around them and learn to work effectively together through their work in the school grounds.

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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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?

Teachers have positive relationships with the pupils which help them to manage their behaviour well. They often use interactive whiteboards to illustrate lessons and help pupils to concentrate on the learning objective. Teachers' use of assessment to support learning is, in many respects, satisfactory. For example, marking is developing well and often provides pupils with helpful information on how to improve their work. Teachers make regular assessments to track pupils' progress and achievements. However, this information is not always used effectively, especially in literacy, to ensure that activities are planned at the correct levels for children with different needs. Within the unit, staff are effective communicators and provide good support for pupils through signs, gestures and finger spelling. Planning is good with well-focused learning outcomes identified. Pupils' independence is encouraged through good use of individual learning targets.

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The curriculum provides a good range of experiences that enthuse the pupils and engage them in the learning process. One of the parents and carers, echoing the views of many, wrote: 'There always seems to be something exciting happening in school.' Links with external partners have enriched the creative aspects of the curriculum and taught pupils effectively about the environment. A wide variety of visits and visitors to the school are arranged to bring further interest and relevance to pupils' learning. A recent visit to the local Sea Life Centre, for example, promoted pupils' knowledge and understanding well and provided first-hand experience to enable them to write fact files about sharks and crabs. Effective partnerships with local bodies provide pupils with good opportunities to develop their sporting and musical skills. Pupils thoroughly appreciate the wide variety of clubs on offer, including Wi-Fit, gardening and street dance. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils with different gifts and talents to develop their skills at higher levels.

Pastoral care is good and pupils are confident to ask for help if they need it. The colourful and stimulating learning environment provides a warm welcome for pupils and their parents and carers. Induction procedures are effective in helping pupils settle quickly in the nursery and good transition arrangements help them move confidently through the school and across to the junior school at the end of Year 2. The support and guidance provided for pupils who are deaf are outstanding. Skilled and knowledgeable teachers and assistants keep a close check on these pupils' achievements and progress and maintain regular communication with parents and carers. Well-organised liaison with speech and language therapists supports pupils' language development. The school's efforts to ensure that these pupils have full access to the curriculum have been recognised by the Inclusion Quality mark. Other pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive satisfactory guidance, although their individual learning targets are sometimes not fully clear and measurable.

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 recent return of the headteacher has refocused the school's vision and drive towards improvement. Staff are well motivated and morale is good. Parents and carers develop good levels of trust in the staff because of the strong partnerships that exist between them and the school. They receive regular newsletters that keep them up to date with school events and have clear information about their children's progress and achievements. Good partnerships with a wide range of agencies support the curriculum effectively and enable staff to gain helpful advice about how to help and guide pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Subject coordinators are enthusiastic and are

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developing their roles satisfactorily to have a more direct impact on improvement in their subjects. However, there is no clear monitoring cycle nor explicit guidance for them in improvement plans to ensure that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in evaluating the school's performance and driving improvement forward.

There are satisfactory procedures to ensure that pupils are safe at school. Staff are properly trained in safeguarding and new staff checked carefully to ensure their suitability. Staff promote equality of opportunity satisfactorily. Senior staff have begun to track the progress of different groups of pupils to identify underachievement. Racist incidents are rare, but procedures are in place to ensure that any which arise are tackled promptly. The governing body is supportive and has a sound understanding of the school's performance. Finances are monitored carefully to ensure that funds are spent appropriately. At present, the governing body has a limited role in evaluating performance and in prioritising areas for improvement but is currently seeking to improve this aspect of its work. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Staff are working to extend links with communities and cultures outside the local area.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	3
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

Children settle in quickly to the nursery 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. They make satisfactory progress through the Nursery and Reception Years.

There is an appropriate balance between activities that are directed by adults and those that children choose for themselves. Planning is satisfactory but activities often lack clear enough targets to ensure that all adults are aware of what children are expected to achieve. The outdoor area is satisfactorily resourced and children use it whatever the

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weather, digging in the garden and riding bicycles around the track. However, activities sometimes lack enough stimulus and excitement to engage children's curiosity, extend their imagination and creativity and let them practise their emerging literacy skills.

Adults have good relationships with children and show high levels of care and concern for their welfare. They supervise children well to make sure they are safe and secure.

However, questioning is not always successful in helping children think about what they are learning. Leadership is sound. Children's progress and achievements are tracked satisfactorily but the information is not always used well enough to plan appropriate activities, especially in reading and writing, to meet their individual needs and help them take the next steps in their learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are extremely positive about the school's work. They agree that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles. They are very happy that the school helps them to support their children at home. 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 Glebe Infant School and Unit for Hearing Impaired 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 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 206 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	78	16	22	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	82	13	18	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	44	59	29	39	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	54	73	19	26	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	55	74	16	22	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	55	74	19	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	56	76	18	24	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)	39	53	29	39	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	54	73	18	24	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	64	24	32	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	54	32	43	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	48	65	26	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	61	82	13	18	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



16 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Glebe Infant School and Unit for Hearing Impaired, Rayleigh, SS6 9HG

Thank you so much for welcoming us recently to your school. You were very keen to tell us all about it and what you enjoyed most. Your views, along with everything else that we saw, helped us to get to know your school and how well it works. You go to a satisfactory school and these are some of the important things we found out about it.

You behave well in lessons and around the school.

You understand how to keep healthy and fit.

Adults look after you well so you feel safe and secure in school.

You enjoy learning about your environment. I hope you managed to get all the willow trees planted in the school garden.

The people in charge are working well with your parents and carers to make sure you are happy and healthy.

There are a few things that could be even better in your school. We have asked your teachers to make sure they always set work at the right levels to help you make faster progress in reading and writing. We have asked the teachers in Nursery and Reception classes to make sure they have clear targets for what they want you to learn, provide more exciting activities outside and ask you questions that really make you think, so that you make better progress, especially in reading and writing. Finally we have asked those in charge to keep a close check on all the activities you are doing and how the adults are helping you, to make sure that you are all learning as well as you can. We would like them to write plans with more detail to make sure that things improve at a faster rate.

All of you can play your part in helping your school become better by making sure you work hard, behave well and attend school every day unless you are ill.

Yours sincerely

Mary Summers

Lead inspector

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