

Baddow Hall Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114898
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	363827
Inspection dates	19–20 May 2011
Reporting inspector	David Wynford-Jones

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	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Cilvert
Headteacher	Gill Marrion
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2008
School address	New Road Great Baddow, Chelmsford CM2 7QZ
Telephone number	01245 471338
Fax number	01245 471232
Email address	admin@baddowhall-inf.essex.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited two assemblies and 13 lessons, observing eight teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school development plan. Inspectors analysed 127 questionnaires completed 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.

- Inspectors looked at the impact of the quality of teaching and the use of assessment to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve equally well.
- They checked pupils' understanding of their targets and the steps needed to reach them.
- They sought evidence to support the school's own self-evaluation judgements of outstanding practice in the school.

Information about the school

Baddow Hall Infant School is smaller than the average school of its type. Most pupils are White British, with a very small proportion from minority ethnic heritages. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. None are at the early stages of learning to communicate in English. The proportions of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities and holding a statement of special educational needs are below national averages. Similarly the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times are also below average. Among other accreditations, the school holds National Healthy Schools status and the International Schools Award.

The school hosts a breakfast club for its pupils and those from the on-site junior school. The privately run after-school club (held on the junior school premises) is open to pupils from Baddow Hall Infant and Junior schools and is subject to a separate inspection.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It serves the needs of its pupils well. The level of care is excellent. This contributes much to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their good understanding of keeping safe. Parents and carers are generally pleased with their children's progress. One wrote, 'I cannot believe how much he has learnt in such a short time'. Others made similar comments.

Children settle quickly in the Reception classes and make good progress. They continue to make good progress as they move through the school. By the end of Year 2, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently above average. Occasionally it is exceptionally high. Although, pupils' skills in writing are above those expected for the age, they are not as well developed as those in reading and mathematics. This is because pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their skills in completing pieces of extended writing.

Pupils make good progress and achieve well because teaching is good. Teachers' expectations are high and lessons are well planned. The pace of most lessons is brisk and pupils work with sustained concentration. In nearly all lessons pupils behave well. At times their behaviour is exemplary. Teachers consistently share the purpose of the lesson with the pupils. As a matter of routine, they remind them about their targets and identify the criteria they can use to structure their work and to evaluate the outcomes. As a result, pupils are clear how to set about the task. Teachers use the electronic white boards confidently to support their teaching. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology for researching and finding out facts for themselves. Even so, the curriculum is good. It is well thought out and supports pupils' academic and personal development effectively. The international links, generated by the International Schools Award, supports pupils' understanding of different cultures, especially those not represented within the local community.

The senior leadership team and the governing body provide effective leadership and a clear sense of direction. Based on a detailed analysis of outcomes for pupils, the school's strengths and weaknesses have been correctly identified. However, the inspection team found that a few of the school's self-evaluation judgements were slightly generous. With the exception of care, guidance and support, the inspection team was unable to find sufficient evidence to endorse the aspects of provision that the school self-evaluated as outstanding. Nevertheless, the appropriate priorities to enhance provision and improve outcomes for pupils are identified in the detailed school development plan. As yet, the measures by which the success of the actions can be evaluated are not sufficiently precise or linked closely enough to pupils' attainment and progress. The school has successfully continued to move forward and maintain above average standards. Given the above, the capacity for further improvement is good.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more use of information and communication technology across the curriculum to promote pupils' skills in undertaking research.
 - Provide more opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their skills in writing at length.
 - Refine the school development plan to include precise measures, linked to pupils' attainment and progress, by which its success can be evaluated.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children enter the Reception classes with skills and knowledge broadly in line with those expected for the age. Throughout the school, pupils respond well to challenge and work hard in lessons. Their speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematical skills are developing well. For example, in a Year 1 class, literacy lesson pupils used reference books to research underwater creatures. They discussed their findings with their peers and used the information to write brief factual sentences. The activity encouraged pupils to think carefully about the different creatures and successfully linked their scientific learning with development of their writing skills. Similarly, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils worked with a talk partner to identify strategies to solve number problems. The pupils used mathematical terminology confidently and, using their knowledge of multiplication and division facts, were able to explain the process clearly.

Pupils' enjoyment of school contributes significantly to their positive attitude towards learning and above average attendance. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities and undertake voluntary tasks. They contribute well to the school as members of the school council or as Eco warriors. One said, 'We like to do things to help each other and to help our school get better'. They act sensibly in the playground and provide support for those who are less confident. They contribute to charity and take part in events beyond the school. The vast majority of pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. Their ability to reflect on others' feelings is good. Pupils' knowledge of cultures other than their own is developing well. Their good knowledge of healthy living and their keenness to adopt a healthy lifestyle contributed to the school being awarded National Healthy Schools status.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who find school challenging make similar progress to their peers. They respond well to additional support provided in lessons and are engaged in their learning. There are no significant differences in the progress of groups of pupils. The school's ongoing monitoring of pupils' progress ensures that any underachievement is identified and additional support is put in place. Pupils' above average attainment in reading, writing and mathematics and the strengths in their personal development ensure that they have a good basis for the next stage in their education and later life.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
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?

In most lessons, pupils make good progress. Typically, there is a good balance between the teacher's and pupils' contributions. Teaching assistants are deployed well and provide good support to individuals and groups. Questioning strategies are used effectively to challenge pupils' thinking and to consolidate learning. The sharing of ideas with a 'talk partner' is a regular feature. This helps pupils to develop their social skills and their ability to communicate with others. Most lessons proceed at a quick pace but occasionally the start of the lesson is over-long and pupils spend too much time sitting on the carpet. Teachers use assessments effectively to plan their lessons and pupils' work. There are many examples of good developmental marking, especially in the English books. Pupils are clear about the next steps to achieve their literacy and numeracy targets and regularly evaluate their own learning. However, teachers do not consistently refer back to previous marking to ensure that the pupils have responded to the comments.

The curriculum supports pupils' learning in mathematics and English effectively. A well thought out theme or topic approach enables pupils to make the links in learning between subjects. For example pupils in Year 1 are following a theme 'Under the Sea' and in Year 2 pupils have 'Health and Growth' as their topic. However, opportunities to consolidate and extend pupils' skills in writing and to develop their ability to use information and communication technology to undertake research are sometimes missed. The curriculum is tailored effectively to meet the needs of pupils who find learning difficult. The curriculum

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is enhanced by good links with external bodies and a good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school.

The exemplary level of care contributes significantly to all pupils' learning, but particularly those identified as potentially vulnerable. All pupils are made welcome and fully included in the life of the school. Systems and structures to ensure pupils' well-being and safety are well established in school routines. Procedures are followed meticulously by all staff. Staff work closely with parents and carers and with a range of agencies to support individual pupils to ensure that their particular needs are met. Attendance records are monitored carefully and any unexplained absence is followed up promptly. Induction and transition arrangements are securely embedded in the work of the school. As a result, pupils move confidently to the next stage in their school career. The efficiently run breakfast club provides a good link between home and school and ensures pupils start the school day in a relaxed and friendly setting. A parent or carer wrote, 'I feel the school offers great support with the breakfast club. It really helps working parents'.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body work together well to drive school improvement. As a group, they accurately evaluate the school's strengths and areas for development. They have correctly identified the priorities for improvement. However, the lack of sharp measurable outcomes in the school development plan hampers the governing body in providing forceful challenge to the leadership team. Nevertheless, senior staff monitor the quality of teaching and learning closely. They set high expectations and hold staff to account for the progress pupils make. Issues relating to equality of opportunity are monitored well. The governing body ensures that any possible discrepancies in performance between groups of pupils or any discrimination are investigated. If necessary, action is taken. Procedures for keeping pupils safe are well established in school routines. The governing body ensures that the school's safeguarding, checks on staff recruitment and child protection procedures are robust. The nominated governor for safeguarding periodically visits the school to ensure that the school's records are up to date. The governing body promotes community cohesion well. It has supported the school in making links with contrasting schools nationally and internationally. It has encouraged teachers to visit schools in other countries and has hosted return visits. The visiting teachers have contributed to the pupils' understanding of different cultures and ways of life by undertaking some teaching in the 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	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Effective induction procedures and supportive relationships with parents and carers ensure children settle quickly, grow in confidence and develop a positive attitude to learning. Staff build on this good start and, using their secure understanding of how young children learn, plan a range of stimulating activities that maintain the children's interests. Overall, the activities are matched well to the needs of the children. There is a good balance between adult-led and activities children choose for themselves. Children engage with staff and visitors and are keen to talk about their activities. However, staff do not always take the opportunity to consolidate children's learning and extend their thinking by engaging them in extended conversation.

The outdoor area and the classrooms are used effectively to promote progress towards the early learning goals in each area of learning. Children particularly enjoy working outdoors and taking responsibility for looking after and watering the various plants. Children are developing a good understanding of personal hygiene and healthy living. They wash their hands routinely before helping themselves to a mid-morning snack.

The Early Years Foundation Stage team works together well and members have a good understanding of both strengths and areas for development. Systems for assessing and recording children's attainment are firmly established and used effectively to monitor children's progress, to evaluate the curriculum and to inform future planning. The emphasis placed on ensuring the children's welfare enables all children to experiment, explore and learn within a safe and supportive environment.

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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

The proportion of questionnaires returned by parents and carers was much higher than in most primary schools. All stated that the school keeps their children safe. The large majority strongly agree that their children enjoy school and most respondents were entirely supportive of the school. A few parents and carers commented that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors judged that staff manage pupils' behaviour effectively. Any incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with appropriately.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Baddow Hall 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 127 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 179 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	75	59	48	38	4	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	86	68	40	31	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	48	38	70	55	7	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	39	70	55	6	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	58	46	65	51	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	60	47	61	48	6	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	67	53	56	44	1	1	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)	61	48	54	43	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	49	39	69	54	7	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	28	73	57	13	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	31	75	59	8	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	41	32	75	59	5	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	67	53	53	42	4	3	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



23 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Baddow Hall Infant School, Chelmsford CM2 7QZ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed our visit and talking to you. You told us that you enjoy school and feel safe because the staff look after you well. You know that you can turn to them if you have any worries. We agree with you that the staff look after you really well. The level of care they provide is excellent. We were also pleased to find that you have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. We saw that you behave well and show respect for each other. At times your behaviour was excellent. You make a good contribution to the school and the local community. Your attendance rate is better than that found in many other schools.

Your school provides you with a good education. You get off to a good start in the Reception classes and continue to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics as you move through the school. The standards you reach by the end of Year 2 are consistently above average and sometimes extremely high. Well done.

We have asked the school to do these things to help you reach higher standards and make even better progress.

Make more use of information and communication technology for you to find things out for yourself.

Give you more opportunities to practise your skills in writing at length.

Make clearer targets for school improvement.

Please remember, to make your school better you must all play your part by always trying your best.

Yours sincerely

David Wynford-Jones

Lead inspector

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