

The White Bridge Community Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114872
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	378945
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2011
Reporting inspector	George Logan

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	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Allsop
Headteacher	Julie Witteridge
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 12 lessons taught by eight different members of staff. Inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, and with staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, records of their progress, teachers' lesson planning, playtime activities and the school's documentation, which included records of teaching and the main improvement plan. Responses to inspection questionnaires completed by staff and by 73 parents and carers were also considered.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work. They looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The accuracy of the school's analysis of entry levels to the Reception classes and the consistency of progress that children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The extent to which staff use assessment information effectively to plan challenging work to enable all pupils, particularly those identified as more able, to make good progress.
- The effectiveness of senior leaders and managers and the governing body in developing the school's capacity to make improvements.

Information about the school

The White Bridge Community Infant School is similar in size to most infant schools. Pupils are predominantly White British and there are only a few pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school shares a building with its partner junior 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?**2****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

Main findings

The White Bridge Community Infant School provides a good education and gives good value for money. Pupils' achievement and personal development are good. From starting points slightly below those nationally expected for this age, pupils attain above average standards by the end of Year 2. Partnerships with parents and carers are good, although the transition programme for children entering the school offers few opportunities for children to visit their new school prior to the start of their first term. Parents and carers value the good quality care and have good opportunities to find out how to support their children's learning. Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and feel very safe. They are well behaved, have positive attitudes to learning and have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles.

Children make good progress in developing basic literacy and numeracy skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Classroom activities engage and challenge children well and this underpins their good progress. As a result, children's attainment when they leave Reception is close to average, other than in writing which is slightly below. In Years 1 and 2, good progress is sustained through good teaching. The recent focus on boys' writing has had a positive impact and the school offers all pupils a rich range of well-structured opportunities which support the development of writing skills and a love of language. By the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level in reading and mathematics is generally above the national average. Pupils' use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is very restricted. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress, as do the few pupils who speak English as an additional language.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, entry assessments do not fully acknowledge children's skills on entry, particularly in personal, social and emotional development, so that entry data is adversely skewed. In addition, limited evidence is retained to map out the steps in children's learning journeys. As a result, it is difficult accurately to demonstrate the progress children make. In Years 1 and 2, there is a robust tracking system and an effective system for setting individual targets. By Year 2, pupils' self-evaluation skills are developing well. Teachers' marking provides pupils with clear guidance, particularly in their writing, as to the next steps in learning. The curriculum is mostly good and supports the development of basic skills well. Extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities are satisfactory and contribute to pupils' good personal development.

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Leadership and management are good, but some aspects of monitoring are not documented with sufficient rigour although senior leaders are clear about what needs to be improved and what the school does well. Middle managers and some subject leaders are new to their roles but these are developing well. The school has begun to share good practice within the school and is now looking to draw upon acknowledged good practice in other schools. The governing body has a secure understanding of its role, although the extent to which it holds school leaders to account is variable. School self-evaluation is accurate. Overall, the school has good capacity for improvement because school leaders have a convincing record of success, enabling pupils to make sustained good progress. There is a clear determination to acknowledge issues and to maintain the pace of improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - more accurately assessing all aspects of children’s attainment on entry, and particularly with regard to personal, social and emotional development
 - improving the rigour in the collection and recording of evidence to demonstrate the progress children make in the Reception Year
 - developing a more thorough pre-entry programme for new children.
- Ensure that pupils have greater access to, and make better use of, information and communication technology, to extend their learning across the curriculum.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management upon pupils’ learning through:
 - developing the roles of middle managers and subject leaders
 - maintaining more rigorous records of monitoring activities
 - ensuring that governors provide greater challenge for school leaders
 - more systematic sharing of good practice within the school and drawing actively on opportunities to introduce good practice observed elsewhere.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children’s skills and experience on entry to Reception are slightly below those that are nationally expected for this age, most markedly in writing. In general, children make good progress, so attainment is broadly average on entry to Year 1. Attainment by the end of Year 2 is above average. Achievement is good for all groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those at the early stages of learning to speak English, are effectively supported and most make good progress.

Pupils are well motivated to learn and relationships are good. Pupils respond well to pace and challenge in teaching. In an outstanding Year 2 literacy lesson they were greatly engaged by the highly effective use of drama to generate interesting

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vocabulary and exciting endings. The brisk pace and the focus on the needs of an audience through the encouragement of clear diction, together with the teacher's unwillingness to settle for the mundane responses, all ensured that pupils were highly motivated to do their very best. In a good Year 1 numeracy lesson on writing number sentences, pupils were highly absorbed by the use of animal puppets, with a well-judged lacing of humour. In well organised group activities pupils demonstrated a high level of independence in organising themselves. They showed a high level of enthusiasm and good learning.

Personal development is a strength. Pupils demonstrate mature attitudes. The school council is active in generating ideas and represents a satisfactory channel for pupils' views. Good social skills and above average basic skills ensure that pupils are well prepared for their later education. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of different faiths, but have limited direct engagement with the lifestyles of people from backgrounds, faiths and cultures different from their own.

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	3
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

How effective is the provision?

Staff use questioning effectively to explore pupils' understanding and extend their learning. Most lessons sustain a good pace although there is, at times, some loss of momentum which affects pupils' learning. The curriculum is adapted well for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and support staff are well-prepared. Regular progress reviews, rigorous tracking in Years 1 and 2 and embedded

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

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assessment strategies support accurate evaluation of pupils' learning needs. Individual learning targets are generally well-established, at a level appropriate to an infant school.

The curriculum is good, effectively promoting above average outcomes in literacy and numeracy. There is a particular strength in the development of pupils' skills in linking sounds to letters and of their reading skills, supported by challenging, interesting books. The school has a successful cross-curricular approach, which promotes enjoyment and contributes well to pupils' good progress. This was evident in the good art work and creative writing arising from the recent topic on the 'Fire of London'. Good display reflects the broad curriculum and the imaginative teaching. Pupils sing with considerable enthusiasm. Personal, social, health and citizenship education has a positive impact upon pupils' personal development. Enrichment and extra-curricular activities are not extensive, but enhance the curriculum satisfactorily.

The school provides increasingly well for pupils identified as gifted, although, as an infant school, there are few external opportunities for them to access. Early identification of pupils who need extra help and the provision of appropriate support programmes help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Those with pupils who speak English as an additional language are helped to learn through a focus on developing their understanding and use of basic language skills. This enables them to fully access the curriculum.

Staff are very responsive to pupils' needs. Transition arrangements to Year 3 are good. The school works well with external agencies to support pupils who need additional help. There is good practice, evident in the case studies, in supporting the health, social and behavioural needs of pupils in challenging circumstances. Parents and carers feel that the school will always go the extra mile to support their children.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a clear view of the school's priorities. Expectations of pupils' learning and of their personal development are high. School leaders and managers are committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity. As a result of significant staff changes in the last school year, and the appointment of several staff at an early stage in their careers, subject leadership has been under review. Currently, the school is beginning to develop new subject leaders, under the guidance of more

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experienced senior staff. Partnerships with other schools are generally good, but the school has identified opportunities for professional development through observing best practice elsewhere, as well as drawing upon the strengths of experienced colleagues internally. Good leadership and management of teaching and learning ensure a consistent approach to planning and the management of pupils' behaviour, so supporting good teaching and learning. Monitoring is mostly thorough, but evaluations are not always rigorously recorded, even though feedback is valued.

Governors are well organised and are beginning to challenge school leaders. However, they recognise that this is an area for further development so governance is satisfactory. Under a new chair, the governing body is increasingly involved in defining a direction for the school through school self-evaluation and development planning. Statutory responsibilities are met. The governing body ensures that safeguarding practice is good. There is a rigorous approach to recording any concerns and actions, so that the school's systems are very thorough. Staff training in child protection is up to date and staff are trained to a level appropriate to their responsibility.

The school is a cohesive community and pupils have satisfactory, though not extensive, links with the local community. Satisfactory community cohesion is promoted through opportunities to study diverse faiths and lifestyles. However, little has yet been done to build a closer engagement with other groups nationally so as to increase pupils' first-hand experiences of those from backgrounds different to their own. Other than an emerging connection with a Zambian school and some charitable activities, there are few international links.

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	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	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a welcoming and well-resourced learning environment. Good leadership and management, an effective curriculum, good teaching and generally good care and support, all ensure that children make good progress in most areas of their learning and development. A good partnership is formed with parents and carers. Although there are no home visits, mostly good links are established with the main feeder pre-schools. Pre-entry visits are arranged for new children and, while these are not extensive, induction arrangements are satisfactory. The school maintains assessment records, organised by subject and individual pupils, to plan the next steps in learning, rather than the detailed individual records of progress, or learning journals, which cover all areas and are common practice in many settings. Assessment is, however, very thorough in tracking children's progress in linking letters and sounds. There is an underlying weakness in the evaluation of children's skills and knowledge on entry. Other than in writing, actual entry points appear to be generally higher than the school's records indicate.

Staff make learning fun and provide a purposeful range of activities which challenge children to think and work together. There is a close focus on personal development and language and literacy skills, particularly speaking, listening and writing. Staff ensure that all children have regular sessions to help develop their writing skills. There is a skilled approach to the teaching of letters and sounds, incorporating rich vocabulary and well-chosen texts. In general, there is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities, complemented by purposeful indoor and outdoor activities. Staff use space and resources creatively so that children can access purposeful learning opportunities indoors and out. Outdoor space, although limited, is used well. Staff recognise the need to continue to enhance and develop opportunities for outdoor learning.

Children's personal development is a key focus. Children have a good understanding of the need to keep themselves healthy and recognise the importance of eating fruit and vegetables. They appreciate the need to play safely. Children's behaviour is good and they contribute well to the smooth running of the day by sharing resources amicably and keeping the room tidy.

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

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An average proportion of parents and carers responded to the survey. Although a small number raised issues specific to individual children, the very large majority of those who responded are very happy with the school and with the care it provides for their children. They feel that the school engages well with parents and carers and that their children greatly enjoy attending. One said: 'The school has exceeded my expectations. What fantastic staff! '. Another said: 'Since my child started, he runs in and can't wait to begin the day'. A very small number of parents and carers feel that their children are not making enough progress. Inspection evidence shows that progress in lessons and over time is mostly good. The school is working to develop further its programme to support those identified as gifted or talented, so that it consistently meets the full range of pupils' needs.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The White Bridge Community 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 73 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 195 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	79	14	19	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	65	89	7	10	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	44	60	28	38	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	45	62	23	32	4	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	53	73	18	25	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	70	21	29	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	62	26	36	2	3	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)	32	44	31	42	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	48	66	22	30	2	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	59	21	29	0	0	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	59	23	32	1	1	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	58	79	15	21	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	77	14	19	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.

12 December 2011

Dear Pupils



Inspection of The White Bridge Community Infant School, Loughton, IG10 3DR

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you, hearing your views and spending time in lessons. We found that yours is a good school and these are some of the best things about it.

- You have good attitudes to learning and make good progress; standards by the end of Year 2 are above average.
- Children in Reception get a good start and make good progress.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- You feel safe in school and you behave well.
- You make a good contribution to the life of the school.
- Staff care for you and support you well.
- You really understand the importance of eating healthily and staying fit.
- The curriculum offers you good opportunities to develop your skills in writing and mathematics and you very much enjoy your lessons as a result.
- The leadership of the school and partnerships with other schools are good.

So that you do even better, we have asked the school to do the following things.

- Ensure that teachers in Reception collect lots of information about how well the children are doing and also provide new children with more opportunities to get to know their new school.
- Ensure that you all have more opportunities to use computers to extend your learning across the subjects.
- Make sure that new staff who look after individual subjects, like English, are well-trained and supported and that all staff have frequent opportunities to share what is done well in the school and to learn from other schools.
- Ensure that governors ask school leaders for an explanation if the school isn't doing as well as it should be.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard and doing your best. I hope that you will have every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

George Logan
Lead inspector

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