

The Leys Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101216
Local Authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	276470
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2006
Reporting inspector	Andrew Howe

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs M Elmore Ms D A E Wiles
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Leys Avenue Dagenham RM10 9YR
Telephone number	020 8270 6470
Fax number	020 8270 6471

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The Leys Primary School is of larger than average size and has a nursery. It serves an area of high deprivation in East London. Over half the pupils are entitled to free school meals. Over a third of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and a larger than average proportion is in the early stages of learning English. About a third of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. The proportion of pupils who enter and leave the school other than at the usual times is high. Attendance is below average. The school was placed in the underachieving category as a result of the last inspection in 2003. The turnover of teachers is high. The school has Investors in People status.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

What the school should do to improve further

* Develop current good and outstanding practice in teaching so that it becomes consistently good. * Raise standards in writing by building on current good practice. * Explore and implement further measures to raise attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

Teaching is satisfactory with some highly effective practice. Teachers plan lessons carefully and give pupils the confidence to learn new concepts, by ensuring that learning is developed in small stages. Teachers and support assistants know their pupils well and relate well to them. In most lessons, teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and create a good climate for learning. The imaginative use of 'visualisers' (very effective overhead projectors) helps to hold pupils' interest and heighten their enjoyment of lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those whose first language is not English are fully involved in all activities. They make sound progress and play an active part in lessons because of the high quality of support provided. In a few cases teachers do not provide enough challenge for their most able pupils. For example, they sometimes use the same photocopied worksheets for all pupils, regardless of ability. This also limits opportunities for pupils to write independently. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously, and their written comments are very useful in pointing out what needs to be done to improve. However, teachers do not always ensure that pupils do the corrections they have requested or implement the suggestions they have made.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The curriculum is broad and interesting and meets the needs of pupils. There is good provision for ensuring that pupils keep healthy and safe. The school places a strong emphasis on developing personal and social skills. This helps pupils to grow in confidence and understand that they can make a useful contribution to the community. The school is working hard to develop pupils' language and literacy skills in other subjects. In the Foundation Stage, activities provide an appropriate balance between direct teaching, and learning through play. Recent improvements have made provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and for those learning English as an additional language, good. As a result their achievement has improved and is now satisfactory.

The school places an appropriate emphasis on enriching pupils' experiences through a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These promote pupils' healthy lifestyles and social skills. Pupils gain further enjoyment through a range of well planned visits.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

Inspectors agree with parents' views that the school is exceptionally good at looking after their children and providing a secure place in which they can learn. As one parent commented 'I would recommend this school to anyone.' The procedures governing the safety and protection of pupils are comprehensive and applied sensitively. The pupils identified as being at risk are very well looked after. The school makes good use of the expertise provided by a broad range of outside professional agencies, and seeks advice as appropriate. Particularly noteworthy is the school's work in supporting pupils who find it hard to control their behaviour. Risk assessments are used very effectively to maintain a healthy and safe environment for pupils and staff.

Pupils trust their teachers to help them if they are unhappy or worried about their work. They are given clear targets to achieve in English and mathematics. These help them to improve their work and motivate them to try harder. Good records are kept to monitor pupils' progress and are frequently updated. These help teachers identify individual strengths and weaknesses in order to provide suitable support and challenge for most pupils. In many cases these procedures are enabling pupils to achieve well in mathematics and to make rapidly improving progress in writing.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Children

Thank you for sharing your views of the school with us when we visited a little while ago. We enjoyed our time with you, and we promised to let you know what we decided after our visit.

You told us what a caring place The Leys Primary School is and how there is always someone you can go to if you have a problem. You were quite right. Teachers and helpers take excellent care of you, and do a great deal to help you learn and stay safe. Your school council means you can have a say in how the school runs, and it has some real improvements to show for its work. Right through from the nursery and reception classes to Year 6 you behave well and make satisfactory progress in your learning. Those of you who find learning hard, or who speak a language other than English at home, get good help. Many of the lessons we saw were satisfactory and some were good. You clearly enjoyed them. You work hard because teachers try to make learning fun. There are many interesting activities you can do at school outside lessons, such as clubs and school trips.

There are some issues we need to mention to you, though: * Teachers mark your books thoroughly, but there is more they could do to make sure you improve your work, and get the right activities for your ability; * The school is doing a lot to improve your writing. This is starting to help you write better and so we want all teachers to use the new methods all the time; * Too many of you are absent from school and miss important work, which usually cannot be repeated. We are asking the school to look at more ways to improve attendance. You could help by coming to school as often as possible. The Leys Primary School is a satisfactory school with good features. If you continue to work as hard, and behave as well as you do now, it could become even better.

Good wishes for the future,

Andrew Howe

Lead Inspector