



Ingatestone Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114909
LEA ESSEX LEA
Inspection number 279473
Inspection dates 18 October 2005 to 19 October 2005
Reporting inspector Ms. Juliet Winstanley LI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Fryerning Lane
School category	Community		CM4 0DF
Age range of pupils	4 to 9		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01277352803
Number on roll	82	Fax number	01277356397
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs.Peri Ryan
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs. Brenda Dalley

Age group 4 to 9	Inspection dates 18 October 2005 - 19 October 2005	Inspection number 279473
----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools.

Description of the school

Ingatestone Infants is a small school in the village of Ingatestone in Essex. There are 82 children on roll taught in three classes. Most of the children come from above average social backgrounds. The number of children eligible for free school meals is below average. Nearly all children are of white British heritage with very few from minority ethnic backgrounds. There are three children whose home language is not English; they are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with statements of special educational need, is below average. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been in post two terms.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school judges its overall effectiveness as satisfactory and inspection confirms that judgement. It has a number of strengths and some weaknesses which the school has identified and started to address. Its strengths are valued by the parents and the children and recognised by the inspection. They include the good provision for children's personal development and well-being and the broad curriculum that gives children a rich experience. Children enjoy school and behave well. Overall by the age of seven, children achieve expected standards for their age. The school is aware that some more able children could do even better because the work in lessons is not always sufficiently challenging. This is because the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but not consistently good enough to ensure that all children achieve as well as they should. The systems to check how well children are doing are new and not yet fully effective. Teachers' marking does show children how to improve their work further. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The recently appointed headteacher provides good leadership and has provided staff with the opportunity to become subject leaders. Consequently these new roles are only just beginning to impact positively on the quality of teaching and learning. The school knows itself well and has a good understanding of what needs to be done next. Most issues from the previous inspection have been successfully tackled. The school has good capacity to improve and gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- develop the roles of subject leaders so that they have a better understanding of quality and standards in their subject areas; - provide a greater level of challenge in lessons for more able learners; - ensure a consistent approach to the use of assessment information and the marking of children's work so that they know what they need to do to improve further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Most children start the reception class with knowledge and skills that are above average for their age. They make good progress and achieve well by the time they begin Year 1. In Years 1 and 2, children make satisfactory progress so that by the age of seven almost all achieve the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. However some children, particularly those who are more able, underachieve because the work they are given is not always challenging enough. The school has identified this weakness and put systems in place to improve teaching to address this issue. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language are supported well and make good progress in their learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development is good. Children like school and their parents report that they don't like missing school even when they are ill. Children enjoy lessons. They listen eagerly to the teachers and each other, answering questions and suggesting ideas with great enthusiasm. There is good provision for children's cultural, moral and social development which has a positive impact on their personal development. They cooperate well with each other in lessons and the playground. Behaviour is good and children are caring and considerate towards each other. Playtime buddies ensure that everyone has someone to play with. Provision for children's spiritual development is satisfactory. Children are encouraged to keep safe and know who to go to if they are unhappy or have a problem. They learn about healthy lifestyles and the importance of healthy eating. The need to take regular exercise is reinforced through the enjoyable and energetic daily aerobics session which all children and staff participate in enthusiastically. Through the school council, children contribute positively to making the school an even better place. Good links have been developed with the local community and the school supports several local and national charities. Attendance is average and school data shows that there are some families who continue to take their children out of school in term time for holidays, further affecting attendance figures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Inspectors and the school agree that teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school. However some teaching is better than this although there are inconsistencies across lessons. In the effective lessons teachers have high expectations of what children can achieve with work that is suitably challenging building on what they have learned before. As a result, children enjoy the activities they are engaged in and achieve well. Lessons are less successful when the work planned does not ensure that all children's needs are met, particularly those who are more able, and the purpose of the lesson is not shared with the children. Teachers check children's work regularly but marking varies in quality and does not show consistently how work could be improved. Teaching assistants, in the lessons seen, provided good support to children who required additional help enabling them to achieve well. A new system has recently been introduced to check how well individual children are doing and identify who may need extra help. However, it is at an early stage of development and not yet fully effective.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a varied curriculum that takes account of the way that young children learn. It enables them to grasp basic skills building on what they have already

learned and understood. Several subjects are taught together through carefully planned topics providing valuable opportunities for children to use the key skills of reading and writing in their work in other subjects. The well-equipped computer suite is used effectively to enhance learning in other subjects of the curriculum. A strength of the curriculum is the provision for children's personal and social education. As a result, children's skills in these areas develop well. The provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, helping them to achieve well in all aspects of their learning. The school provides a good range of additional learning activities that enriches children's learning. These include country dancing, drumming and singing. Children also have the opportunity to learn Spanish at an after-school club set up in partnership with the local secondary school. A wide range of trips, visits and visitors provide further opportunities to widen children's experiences and further their interests.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support but there are some significant strengths. Consistent guidance from all staff helps children to understand how to treat others and behave well. Risk assessments are completed when necessary ensuring children learn in a safe environment. Child protection procedures are in place and staff know how to raise any concerns they may have. Children proudly take on additional responsibilities, for example as playground buddies or school council members, which contribute well to their personal and social development. The school has forged very good relationships with parents. However, the school's systems for checking on children's progress are still developing and staff do not yet have a complete picture of how well children are doing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall with several good features. The headteacher has a good knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. On taking up her post, she very quickly identified key areas that needed to be addressed to further improve learning for all children. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive document that reflects the headteacher's clear awareness of the priorities to be addressed and the strategies needed to achieve them. At its centre is raising standards through improved teaching and learning to ensure that all children achieve as well as they possibly can by the age of seven. The headteacher has introduced good systems for reviewing how well the school is doing. She has surveyed parents and children's views and acted quickly to address any concerns they have raised. Parents appreciate the much improved communication with the school and are very positive about the developments that have already taken place. The role of subject leaders is under-developed. Teachers have only recently had the opportunity to take on these responsibilities and are just starting to look regularly in detail at the quality of children's work and the quality of teaching within their subject areas. As a result weaknesses, such as the lack of challenge for some of the more able children, are

becoming apparent. The governing body is very supportive of the school and the chair of governors has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The new headteacher provides governors with regular reports and information which have enabled them to become much more involved in monitoring aspects of the school's work. The improvements to leadership and management demonstrate that the school has the capacity to improve further.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for being so welcoming when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking to you about your work and finding out about the things you like to do in school. Everyone was very friendly and polite. These are the things I liked most. - You all enjoy your lessons and listen well to your teachers. I can see that the headteacher and all the staff make sure that your school is a very happy and safe place for you to come to each day. - Your behaviour is good in lessons and at playtimes. I think that having playground buddies is a really good way of making sure that everyone has a friend to play with at playtime. Your school council is working hard to make the school an even better place for you all. - You all know how to keep fit and healthy. The daily aerobics session is such fun and it is good to see all the adults in the school joining in the exercises with you. The healthy school lunches are delicious and you told me that you know how important it is to eat healthy meals. But I know everyone wants to do better and I have suggested a few things to your teachers that I think will help. They are already working on ways to make lessons more interesting because I think some of you, especially those who find learning easy, could do even more. I wish you all every success in the future and hope that you continue to enjoy your time in school.