



Parkhill Infants' School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 133938
LEA Redbridge LEA
Inspection number 282394
Inspection dates 8 May 2006 to 9 May 2006
Reporting inspector Andrew Marfleet AI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Lord Avenue
School category	Community		Clayhall
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		Iford IG5 0DB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8550 1730
Number on roll	323	Fax number	020 8503 9024
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Peter Cowup
Date of previous inspection	22 April 2002	Headteacher	Miss Margaret Mersh

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Children from a variety of backgrounds attend the school: over half represent Asian communities, about 20% are White British and 10% are from various Black communities. An increasing number of children, now 62%, have a first language other than English. The number entitled to free school meals is below average and mobility rates are low. The proportion with learning difficulties is below average. The school includes a nursery of 70 children.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school judges itself to be good but the inspectors believe that it is outstanding. It provides excellent value for money. It has improved significantly since the last inspection and its rising standards show its capacity to improve further.

Children join the Foundation Stage with standards that are clearly below average. Provision here is excellent. Pupils make outstanding progress as they move through the school, so that standards are above average by the time they leave. Recent Year 2 test results are very high and have been improving steadily over recent years. Some of the best results are from pupils for whom English is an additional language.

The outstanding achievement can be attributed to the outstanding teaching and learning. Most lessons are at least good, and this, combined with the high quality support given in and outside the classrooms, ensures that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make excellent progress.

The quality of the care, support and guidance is also outstanding, leading to a high standard of personal development. Pupils are prepared extremely well for their next stage of education. The curriculum is very impressive, not least in the Foundation Stage, with a rich range of experiences being made available for the children. Attendance is close to average: pupils enjoy coming here, and the number of absences simply reflects the fact that a few families take holidays in term-time.

Outstanding leadership and management lie behind the impressive achievements. The headteacher knows every child in the school and is held in high regard by parents. With excellent support from her senior colleagues and the governing body, she has made Parkhill Infants a school to which parents are proud to send their children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Work with the minority of parents whose children are missing too much school in order to reduce absence levels.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 2, they have made outstanding progress. They meet the very challenging targets the school sets them.

When pupils join the Foundation Stage, their attainment levels are below average, particularly in language development and social skills. The progress they make in the Nursery and Reception classes ensures that their attainment is broadly average when they enter Year 1, and some produce writing that can be displayed with pride, although others still struggle in areas that rely heavily on spoken language skills.

The impressive progress continues in Years 1 and 2, so that the attainment of pupils by the time they leave the school is above national averages in all the subjects tested. Test scores have in fact improved steadily over the last few years, so that a significant

proportion of pupils now achieve higher than the expected levels. Pupils for whom English is an additional language attain higher levels overall than other pupils.

The school's intervention strategies and support ensure that pupils with learning difficulties make at least as much progress as other pupils. There are more of these pupils in the current Year 2, and this is one reason why overall standards here may not be quite as high as in recent years, but the progress in the year group is still outstanding.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. They are happy and secure at school and show high levels of confidence and self-esteem. They are well prepared for transition to the junior school, developing the skills and awareness that will take them forward in life.

They have a very clear sense of their moral responsibilities towards others and have raised substantial sums of money for charity. They also understand their responsibilities towards their immediate surroundings and the wider environment. Adults and pupils clearly respect each other and their different beliefs and traditions; cultural diversity is celebrated regularly. Pupils behave extremely well throughout the school day and have a strong sense of right and wrong. Year 1 pupils wrote very thoughtful letters of apology from Goldilocks to the Three Bears, for example. They also show a high level of awareness of how to stay healthy and safe. They are well-informed about healthy food choices; one boy volunteered, 'I like exercise because it's good for your heart.'

Levels of absence are in line with those in similar schools. The majority of pupils have good levels of attendance, but there is a significant minority who are taken on holidays during school terms.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding throughout the school. This has a highly positive impact on the pupils' achievement and personal development.

Marking is thorough and very detailed checks are kept on the progress of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties. The information gathered is used to identify the precise support each individual or group within a class needs in order to make the best progress they can. The teaching that the pupils then receive is of very high quality. Behaviour is managed effortlessly because the learning activities are well planned, interesting and above all challenging. Pupils appreciate the help they are given, one commenting that teachers 'teach at the same pace as you learn'.

Relationships throughout the school are harmonious and contribute to the industrious atmosphere. Teachers and their assistants work very well in teams to ensure a coherent

approach across year groups. In the Foundation Stage the children benefit from skilled interventions by adults to develop the children's self-confidence and build carefully on their existing knowledge and understanding. As pupils move up the school, they display a growing sense of how to take responsibility for their own learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum the school offers to its pupils is outstanding, and fully meets their needs and entitlement. Work and appropriate support are thoroughly planned to ensure that all pupils - including those with learning difficulties - make excellent progress, particularly in the key skills of English and mathematics. Information and communication technology is effectively used to enhance learning. Planning and provision in the Foundation Stage classes provide a stimulating range of learning opportunities with a very good balance between adult-led and independent activities.

The curriculum is greatly enriched by the number, quality and range of visitors and by the special events that are organised. These all contribute to the pupils' awareness of life beyond school. Opportunities are planned to make links across different subjects, making the learning relevant and interesting. Vibrant displays of the pupils' work, including that of Foundation Stage children, show how much the school values their achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support, through recognising and building on the strengths of each individual child. Teachers have a clear understanding of the needs of their pupils and plan for them thoroughly, working closely with outside agencies. As a result, all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make outstanding progress and are so enthusiastic about their school.

The school has effective systems for child protection. Health and safety procedures and risk assessments are thorough. Pupils are given a good understanding of how to keep healthy and are taught how to behave responsibly and keep themselves safe. An excellent programme of visits from the emergency services and caring professions contributes to this.

The school takes good steps to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and arrive punctually, but finds it hard to prevent a minority of pupils from being taken on holidays in term-time. In all other respects, however, the school and parents work very effectively together, not least in sharing targets with the children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. Parents were keen to express how impressed they are with the headteacher, who is always available to talk

to them and who knows every pupil well. She is supported by a strong leadership team; each year group benefits from the presence of a senior teacher in their team, which ensures coherence in planning, assessment, targeting, and monitoring of teaching and learning. Teachers and support staff in each year are thus empowered to plan for excellence. This leads inevitably to the high standards and outstanding achievement of the children.

The school knows itself extremely well, even though its self-evaluation errs on the side of caution. All staff are involved in decision making. Subject leaders have clearly defined roles which ensure that expertise is shared and resources are deployed effectively. Teachers are also given excellent support by staff responsible for special needs and for English as an additional language.

The governing body are adept at challenging and encouraging the school, and are responsible for some recent imaginative initiatives - such as the fitness trail that now graces the school grounds.

There can be no doubt that the improvements made since the last inspection have been driven by the outstanding leadership of the school. It has an excellent capacity to improve even further.

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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
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	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

Children

Thank you for making us so welcome at your school. And a special thank you to those who talked to us. We really enjoyed looking at your work and watching you in lessons and assemblies. You are lucky to be part of such a brilliant school.

Your headteacher, and all the others who help you to learn, want the school to get even better. That will be difficult, as it is so good already. You and your parents can help by making sure you don't miss any school. It's best to go away just in the school holidays. Why your school is so good :) You make wonderful progress in your work. :) You behave very well, and you really enjoy being at school :) Your headteacher is excellent and she has a great team to help her :) The teachers and other staff help you to learn really well :) They support and look after you really well, too :) The school is getting better all the time.

We wish you well in the future and hope that you will always be as happy as you are at Parkhill Infants.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Marfleet

Lead Inspector