



William Ford CofE Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101234
Local Authority Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number 286002
Inspection date 27 September 2006
Reporting inspector Keith Williams

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Ford Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Dagenham
Age range of pupils	7-11		RM10 9JS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8270 6582
Number on roll (school)	331	Fax number	020 8270 6585
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Graham Mundy
		Headteacher	Mrs Mandy Short
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2001		

Age group 7-11	Inspection date 27 September 2006	Inspection number 286002
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© 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 an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average and serves a disadvantaged area. There are more pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds than in most schools. An increasing number of pupils speak English as an additional language, although very few are at the early stages of learning the language. The headteacher was appointed in January 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school in which pupils make excellent progress to reach exceptionally high standards. A combination of high quality teaching, care and leadership means that pupils, whatever their ability, background or gender, are able to fulfil their potential. Pupils grasp this opportunity. Their excellent personal development is a significant factor in their success because they enjoy school and are eager to learn. Their behaviour is exemplary. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive. As one put it, 'I am glad that my children are in this school.'

The headteacher, very ably supported by the assistant head, staff and governors, provides excellent leadership and management. Senior staff keep a very close check on the school's work. There is a very strong emphasis on team work amongst staff, who provide excellent teaching and support for pupils. They are highly reflective, self-critical and expect much from themselves and the pupils in their care. Teachers are held accountable for their pupils' progress. Test results and wide ranging assessments are evaluated carefully and the information they gather is very well used to meet pupils' differing needs. The school has rightly identified the need to review the way that assessments are recorded as, for example, the tracking of pupils of different backgrounds is currently too time-consuming.

The day-to-day assessment of pupils is particularly strong. Lessons are planned to take account of how well pupils have learned their previous work and a close check is kept on their understanding during lessons. Marking is perceptive and invariably provides pupils with clear guidance of how to improve. Consequently, pupils know clearly how well they are doing and what they need to concentrate on next. This has a major impact on their excellent achievement and the high standards they reach. They respond very positively to the outstanding curriculum and the extensive activities outside of lessons add to their high level of enjoyment. Pupils know how to stay healthy and safe and their excellent progress in literacy and numeracy means that they are very well prepared for their future lives. Through their council, and initiatives such as the 'Playground Squad', they make a very strong contribution to their school and the wider community.

Pupils' high standards are reflected in the national test results for eleven year olds in 2005 which were exceptionally high. Taking account of pupils' below average starting points, this represents an excellent level of achievement. Areas for development, such as the need to increase the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in writing, are tackled rigorously and the success of this work is shown in the improved results for English in 2006. Whilst modest about their effectiveness, the school leaders have a very clear idea of how to maintain these high standards and they have the capacity to achieve further success.

What the school should do to improve further

- Streamline systems of recording pupils' progress to make them more manageable.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' attainment when they first start school is below average. They make excellent progress and standards are exceptionally high. Much of the work seen in school is of a very high quality and this is reflected in the school's results in the national tests for pupils in Year 6. These are consistently and significantly above average and, in some years, including 2005, they are exceptionally high. Taking account of pupils' starting points, these results represent an excellent level of achievement. The school rightly recognised that, while results in other areas were rising, those in English, although good, were not keeping pace. In particular, too few pupils were reaching the higher Level 5 in writing. The success of their work to change this is evident in pupils' high quality writing and in improved English results for 2006, despite this group of pupils having lower starting points than those of previous years. Across the school, there is no significant difference in the progress made by pupils of different age, ability, background or gender. Indeed, the performance of boys in the Year 6 tests is better than that seen nationally.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' outstanding personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is at the heart of their academic success and their preparedness for future life. They thrive in the school's calm, supportive, but exciting, environment. Pupils play a full part in the life of the school and the vast majority take part in activities outside of lessons. Many contribute to its smooth running through, for example, the highly influential school council and older pupils are proud of their role as leaders in the 'Playground Squad.' They particularly appreciate the healthy tuck-shop - instigated by them - and they have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. Pupils support a wide range of charities and extend a welcome to local people who attend concerts and performances. Pupils' behaviour, in lessons and on the playground, is exemplary and contributes to the progress they make. Consequently, pupils have a high level of enjoyment; their rate of attendance is rising and is now above average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Exceptional teaching and learning ensure that pupils make rapid progress and reach high standards. Teachers provide interesting and exciting lessons that capture pupils' imagination and attention. Very careful planning meets pupils' differing needs and takes full account of how well they have learned their previous work. Expectations are very high. Consequently, pupils of all abilities are able to do their best. Those who need extra help get it. Pupils appreciate the patience shown by staff, but also recognise

that they are expected to find things out for themselves first. A very close check is kept on their understanding during lessons. Misconceptions are dealt with sensitively which means that pupils are not afraid to make mistakes as they learn new work. More able pupils are challenged to reach the higher levels of which they are capable. Marking ensures that pupils are fully aware of how well they are doing and where they can improve and this contributes to their progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides an excellent curriculum that has a significant impact on pupils' progress and enjoyment. Subjects are linked together very well and there are extensive opportunities for pupils to use reading, writing and mathematics in other subjects. This has contributed, in particular, to raising standards in writing. Visits and visitors enhance the work done in lessons and support the excellent planning for pupils' personal development. The school provides an impressive range of out-of-school clubs and activities. Many of these focus on sport and arts and are held in the school's excellent Centre, funded jointly with the adjacent infant school. Levels of participation are very high.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Providing a high level of care is fundamental to the school's commitment to pupils' all-round development. A high priority is placed on ensuring that all pupils, including those who might be vulnerable, are safe, healthy and can reach their potential. Links with outside agencies are excellent. Very strong support given to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities ensures that they make similar progress to their classmates. Assessment is comprehensive and a very close check is kept of the progress and well-being of all pupils. Paper-based records are kept to track the progress of individual pupils. The school has rightly identified the need to streamline its approach, as the tracking of different groups of pupils is time-consuming, and plans are in hand to use computers to speed this up. Despite this drawback, assessment information is used exceptionally well to ensure that pupils understand their next steps.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

All staff share the senior leaders' drive and determination to maintain high standards and provide the best possible education for pupils. Leadership roles are shared widely amongst staff, which fosters this common sense of purpose and is instrumental in the school's continued success. All aspects of the school's work are monitored thoroughly and areas identified for improvement are tackled systematically. Subject leaders, for example those for English and information and communication technology (ICT), have secured significant improvements in their subjects. As a result, standards in writing are higher, particularly amongst higher attainers, and improvements in provision for

ICT mean that standards are now in line with what is expected of pupils of this age. High academic achievement is not at the expense of the pupils' wider development, however, and the leaders place an equally strong importance on ensuring that pupils are safe, happy and get the help or challenge they need. Governors provide excellent support by checking the school's performance and holding the headteacher and staff to account. Although their evaluation of the school's effectiveness is modest, the school leaders have a very clear understanding of what is working well and what might improve. They have sustained a high level of success in recent years and have the capacity to continue to do so.

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

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for the very friendly way you welcomed me to your school when I visited recently. I am writing to tell you of my findings. Many of you took time to speak to me and your views and opinions were very helpful. I would like to say a special thank you to the school council. You really make a difference to your school.

Many of you told me how much you enjoy school and that you think you are getting on well. I agree. Your school is outstanding and there are many ways in which it is much better than I usually find. Your work is of a very high standard and shows that you are trying very hard to do your best. I enjoyed visiting your classrooms and I was very pleased to see that your writing has improved. You and your teachers and the other adults work very well together. I am sure you will keep it up.

One of the reasons you are doing so well is because your headteacher and the other adults in school are excellent and do everything to keep you safe and help you do your best. You do your bit too. Your behaviour is excellent and you are very keen to learn. You are very friendly to each other in lessons and on the playground. Congratulations to the 'Playground Squad' for making playtimes so enjoyable. It is fantastic that so many of you take part in clubs after school and I really like your sport and arts centre.

Even though your school is excellent, your headteacher and staff want to make it even better and I know that you will help them. Your teachers spend a lot of time keeping a check on how you are doing, making sure that you get the right kind of work and setting you targets. They are looking at ways to make this easier, perhaps by using computers to check on all the assessments you do.

Once again, thank you very much for your help and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Williams Lead inspector