

# Parklands Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102299
<b>Local Authority</b>	Havering
<b>Inspection number</b>	286331
<b>Inspection date</b>	2 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Nick Butt

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	478
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs N Sepple
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs E Bush
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 June 2001
<b>School address</b>	Havering Road Romford RM1 4QX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01708 743404
<b>Fax number</b>	01708 742184

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This large school serves a mixed residential area of owner-occupied and local authority housing. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The vast majority of pupils are from a White British background. Hardly any pupils speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is about average for a school of this size. In the past two years the school has won awards for the development of its staff and for promoting physical education. Almost a third of the teaching staff were originally engaged as graduate trainees by the school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding strengths. The headteacher and deputy head provide effective leadership and have raised standards and achievement in the past year, especially in writing which was in need of some improvement. Pupils achieve well because the teaching is good and there is an outstanding curriculum that interests and excites them. This means they have excellent attitudes to learning and are very keen to participate in lessons. Standards are well above average.

The personal development and well-being of pupils are outstanding. Their behaviour is exemplary and they show great respect for one another. Despite its size, the school has managed to create a family atmosphere in which all pupils are valued and encouraged to do their best. They have a particularly good awareness of how to live a healthy lifestyle, and take part in wide variety of sports. Pupils report that they feel free from bullying and are confident that any incidents will be dealt with promptly. They make a considerable contribution to the school community through the work of the school council and in commenting upon the curriculum. They also reach out to the wider community, especially through music and dance. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, appreciating the excellent range of enrichment activities that benefit them. As one parent commented, 'I feel Parklands helps build its children into confident well-rounded individuals.' They leave the school with well above average basic skills and are very well prepared for secondary school.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils and give them challenging work to do. They involve pupils well in lessons and use a wide range of methods to make learning stimulating. Sometimes, in English lessons, too much time is spent introducing the task and this means that pupils are not able to finish writing down their ideas. The academic guidance given to pupils is good. They know the targets they have to improve, and often talk about their learning with staff. Pupils are extremely well cared for, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. The four special needs coordinators really know the pupils in their own year group and divide the work up efficiently between themselves.

The leadership and management of the school are good. It runs smoothly with an effective management structure that is developing the skills of middle managers. Leaders form an accurate view of the school's performance through regular monitoring and analysis of data. However, lesson observations tend to be too informal, and areas for development are not set out clearly enough where the teaching is less than good. All staff contribute to strategic plans and have a shared vision for the future direction of the school. The governing body supports and challenges the school well, making use of the considerable experience and expertise that governors have to offer. In view of the school's success in raising standards and boosting teaching, leaders are well placed to make further improvements.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by ensuring that pupils have sufficient time in lessons to record their ideas.
- Use rigorous monitoring to improve teaching where it is less than consistently good.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enter the school with standards that vary from year to year but are usually above average. They achieve well, and in recent years pupils have left the school with well above average standards. This was not the case in 2006 in writing, when standards dropped back partly for reasons relating to that particular cohort. Leaders put in place a series of measures to get achievement back on track, including a focus on improving the teaching of literacy and more rigorous analysis of performance data. A year on, this has proved successful and pupils across the school have made considerable gains in writing, such that standards are once again well above average. All groups of pupils achieve well, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, who receive good support from a dedicated team of experienced teaching assistants.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They experience moments of wonder through participating in residential visits, living history days and productions. A recent Eisteddfod gave pupils opportunities to celebrate their creativity through performance, model-making and art. The school's own farmyard enables pupils to care for the animals and see nature close-up. Pupils know all about healthy eating, and enjoy finding out more with a local chef. They are fully aware of keeping safe, and the dangers of smoking and drug abuse. They take cycling proficiency lessons. Pupils look out for one another. One pupil said, 'If you're on your own someone will come and help you.' The older pupils look after the younger ones when they start school. The orchestra also plays for elderly people and pupils invite them to attend their Harvest Festival. Pupils contributed rice to help people in Africa, and raise money for charities. Most pupils attend well, and the school has good systems in place to ensure that absence is kept to a minimum. Year 6 pupils raise money themselves to fund their leaving trip. They grow into confident and self-assured young citizens and are exceedingly well prepared for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace. There is a high level of challenge, even for groups of lower ability pupils, and they respond to this with enthusiasm. One pupil said, 'They give us practical work to do, which we enjoy - we get into it more and we produce better work.' Pupils work together with great cooperation and have a real thirst for learning. In an outstanding lesson, Year 3 pupils were pondering a dilemma faced by a girl who had to decide whether to follow her brother into a tunnel or not. They very sensitively discussed the arguments for and against, with one pupil commenting that there were also dangers in her staying outside. They relished writing a note from the girl on scraps of torn paper that were found outside the tunnel. These pupils had plenty of time to put their ideas down, but in some lessons the introduction goes on too long, with the result that pupils are rushed at the end to finish their work. Pupils with learning difficulties are taught well, and are fully included in lessons because they are given the extra help they need.

## Curriculum and other activities

### Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding because it is relevant for all pupils, innovative and creative, with very strong links across subjects. The curriculum is also considerably enriched by a lavish array of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. This contributes in no small measure to pupils' outstanding personal development and their love of school. Pupils are encouraged to work on projects at home, some of which are displayed in the school's new art gallery. One child made a sculpture of hands gingerly supporting the world, which gave a powerful message about the fragility of our existence. The history curriculum is particularly vibrant, sending pupils on voyages of discovery into a host of different subjects. Some pupils made large scale models of Roman coins; others made mathematically exact Greek temples. Pupils wrote newspaper articles about the mysterious death of Lord Carnarvon of Egyptian fame and interpreted paintings of Victorian life. Special themed events provide an imaginative focus, such as Cake Day, when everyone had a cake to decorate, and London Week. The very wide range of clubs includes table tennis, salsa, gardening, two choirs and an orchestra.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support offered to pupils are outstanding because staff value everyone as an individual and do all they can to bring the best out of them. As one pupil commented, 'When you're feeling down your teachers encourage you.' There are excellent systems in place to identify and support pupils with learning difficulties, and resources are used flexibly to target help where it is needed most. A parent said, 'The support we have received has been wonderful.' Pupils are encouraged to join in conversations about how well they are doing with parents and teachers. Representatives of the pupils also meet termly with subject leaders to review their work and make suggestions for the future. This innovative approach has the dual benefit of making pupils more aware of their learning and helping subject leaders to make the curriculum even more exciting. All safeguarding arrangements are in place. Pupils are aware of their targets and receive good feedback in their books about the quality of their writing.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher and deputy head have a clear vision for the school and have built a strong team of year group and subject leaders. Roles and responsibilities are well defined, and there is a consistency of approach, which helps accelerate pupils' progress. The way that staff responded to the need to raise standards in writing has resulted in rapid development across the school. There are opportunities to share good practice, and the school has a well-deserved reputation for training young teachers. Much of the monitoring is effective, but lesson observations by senior leaders are too descriptive and do not make sufficiently clear what needs to be done to improve. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. The comment by one that 'any parent should feel privileged to have their child at Parklands,' reflects the views of many. They value the happy atmosphere, which the school's leadership has nurtured over many years, and the knowledge that their children make good progress. The school occupies a large site and the grounds are well cared for and provide an attractive resource for outdoor learning.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> 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.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

14 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Parklands Junior School, Havering Road, Romford, RM1 4QX

Thank you very much for making me so welcome at your school. I did enjoy my visit. Yours is a good school with some outstanding strengths. These include your behaviour and your great desire to learn, the exciting curriculum that you enjoy and the way you are so well cared for by school staff. These are some other things I liked about your school.

- You achieve well and reach standards that are well above average.
- The teaching is good and your lessons are interesting and well planned.
- The school is well led and everybody pulls together as a strong team.
- There is an excellent range of clubs and activities for you to enjoy.
- You make very good use of the grounds, especially the Quad Farm.
- You help one another and reach out to the local community, for example through your music.
- You have plenty of opportunity to discuss your learning with the teachers and to tell them how you think things could be improved.

I think you have made great strides with your writing this year. In some lessons you do not get much time to record your ideas, because there is too much discussion beforehand. I believe you need to be able to think about what you want to say and also have enough time to get it all down on paper. I have asked the senior leaders of the school to watch more of your lessons and to make clear any ideas they may have about how you could learn even faster.

Thank you once again for being so friendly. My very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. N. Butt, Lead Inspector