



Parklands Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102300
Local Authority Havering
Inspection number 286332
Inspection date 24 January 2007
Reporting inspector Nick Butt

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

The inspection of the day care was carried out under Children Act 1989: Part XA (as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000) and, where (funded) nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Type of school	Infant	School address	Havering Road
School category	Community		Romford
Age range of pupils	3-7		RM1 4QX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01708 746806
Number on roll (school)	381	Fax number	01708 737908
Number on roll (day care)	16	Chair	Mr Bernard Gilley
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Bushell
Date of previous school inspection	9 July 2001		
Date of previous day care inspection	1 January 1970		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
3-7	24 January 2007	286332

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger-than-average school serves an urban area. It has a sixty place Nursery. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are also some pupils from several different minority ethnic groups. Increasing numbers of pupils are joining the school speaking little English. There is an after-school club that operates during term time for up to 16 children who attend Parklands infant and junior schools. It was registered in November 2006 and opened its doors in January 2007. The school has awards for teaching basic skills, for the way it develops its staff, for promoting healthy lifestyles and for its nursery provision.

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 that provides a high quality of education for its pupils. Extremely effective teaching ensures that all pupils make very rapid progress. They thoroughly enjoy school and have excellent attitudes to learning, cooperating together very well. The secret of the school's success lies in its outstanding leadership team, who work very closely with all staff to ensure a shared approach. Adults know the pupils really well and tailor the rich and varied curriculum to meet their specific needs. Consequently, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities do extremely well. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English are fully included and receive excellent support. The quality and standards of the after-school club are good.

Achievement is outstanding. Test results at the end of Year 2 have been significantly above average for the past three years, especially in writing. Standards in mathematics are not as high as in reading and writing. This is because, whilst pupils have no trouble counting, they sometimes find it difficult to apply their knowledge of numbers in practical ways. The school is focusing on giving pupils plenty of opportunities to develop these skills. The teaching is outstanding because teachers plan together very carefully and evaluate each day's lessons to assess how well their pupils are doing so they can plan for the next day. They make learning fun but purposeful. The provision in the Nursery and Reception classes is extremely good. Each classroom is a hive of activity, with pupils happily engaged in tasks they have chosen themselves, or working in groups under the skilful direction of adults.

The personal development and well-being of pupils is outstanding. They respond extremely well to the many interesting and exciting activities that fill their day. They know they are valued by adults. One parent said, 'My child has the confidence to approach teachers with ideas.' Pupils feel safe and extremely well cared for. Despite the cramped conditions in many parts of the school, they get on very well and help one another out. The Year 2 pupils enjoy being playground leaders. Pupils grow their own vegetables as part of their appreciation of healthy eating, and get plenty of exercise. The school prepares them extremely well for transition to junior school.

The headteacher and deputy head provide excellent leadership. They manage to combine paying close attention to detail whilst seeing the bigger picture. They have established a reflective culture that places the achievement and well-being of pupils at the centre of all that the school does. The governing body is effective in its role as a critical friend to the leadership team. The school has maintained above average standards and continued to develop rapidly in recent years. It is extremely well placed to go from strength to strength.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics to match the high standards in writing by focusing on how pupils use and apply their knowledge of number.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding and consequently standards are significantly above average. Children enter the Nursery with abilities below those usually expected, especially in language and communication. They make very rapid progress in the Foundation Stage because of the excellence of the provision they receive both through highly effective teaching and through a vibrant and stimulating early years' curriculum. They continue to achieve extremely well in Years 1 and 2. Pupils achieve well in their mathematical development, but do not reach quite the same high standards as they do in writing. They find it difficult to use their knowledge of number in the real life situations presented in the national tests at the end of Year 2. Pupils' excellent behaviour and willingness to work together cooperatively contributes very favourably to their rate of progress. This is monitored very closely by teachers, who set challenging targets based on a detailed analysis of pupils' abilities when they leave the Reception year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They have a far greater cultural and spiritual awareness than they did at the time of the last inspection. Pupils celebrate one another's cultures, for example during a week devoted to India, when parents also come in and share their experiences. Pupils enjoy many awe-inspiring moments as a result of the imaginative and exciting things they do in school. On the day of the inspection, the serendipity of fresh snowfall meant pupils could explore this phenomenon outside, for some for the very first time. The attendance of the vast majority of pupils is good. Extended absence by a small minority means the figures are slightly below average, but the school meets parents and discusses with them how this can be resolved. Pupils have an extremely good understanding of what it means to live healthily, and spoke with relish about their gardening club, which is 'only for people who don't mind worms!' They enjoy school so much they don't want to change anything. 'We like it how it is,' they said. They feel free from bullying and harassment, and are keen to help others, whether as monitors around the school, or raising money for a hospice attended by a former pupil. Members of the school council are proud of the contribution they make, such as in obtaining new play equipment. Pupils leave the school with a strong set of basic skills and the confidence and love of learning to see them very well prepared for life at the junior school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers plan meticulously to make learning as effective as they can and are constantly monitoring the impact their teaching is

having upon pupils' achievement. This attention to detail means that lessons are full of pace and interest, and teachers have high expectations of what they want pupils to learn. They make excellent use of opportunities to develop pupils' speech and language skills. For example, Reception children had a lively discussion with their teacher about bathing a baby and then tried this out for themselves using dolls. The children took great care in holding the 'baby' correctly, and chatted about what they were doing. Teaching assistants are very well trained and make a valuable contribution to the team, working extremely effectively with groups and individuals. A strong feature of the teaching is how aspects of good Foundation Stage practice are carried through into Years 1 and 2, such as encouraging pupils to make independent choices and learning through structured play. One pupil said, 'I like our home corner. It was a post office and now it's changed into a castle so we can dress up as princesses and knights of a long time ago.'

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. An immense amount of thought and imagination has gone into creating a lively and stimulating curriculum that motivates pupils and gives them a great desire to learn. This contributes very well to their excellent personal development and helps to explain why they make such rapid progress in their learning. In the Nursery and Reception classes, the youngest children enjoy a rich stream of exciting experiences, all planned with a purpose, which harness their natural curiosity. The school sets great store by its outdoor curriculum, which all children access, providing some freedom from the confines of the crowded building. A programme of visits and visitors related to the learning enriches the curriculum considerably, and adds to pupils' enjoyment of school. The after school club also stimulates and interests them. Pupils keep active, not only through two hours of timetabled physical education per week, but also through their participation in clubs. There are close links with a local Sports Partnership, which brings specialist coaching such as tennis and cricket to extend pupils' experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. Parents are very happy that their children are extremely well looked after and feel free to approach the school with any worries. As one commented, 'The staff have always been very helpful and considerate'. Excellent procedures are in place for the identification and support of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Their targets are reviewed termly with both the child and parents. The school has set up an informal support group for parents, and invites professionals from outside agencies to drop in to talk about subjects such as epilepsy and asthma. When it was clear waiting lists were too long for speech therapy, the school employed its own therapist, and trained up its staff to provide the necessary support. This proactive approach is a feature of the school's outstanding practice, and is one of the reasons why it has responded so well to the increasing numbers of pupils

who are arriving speaking very little English. Excellent tracking systems and skilful analysis of data ensures that all staff are aware of children's needs and the next steps for their learning. Targets are shared with pupils, and marking is very effective at showing them how to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The headteacher's clearly defined vision permeates the school at every level. Every decision is judged by its potential impact on pupils' learning. There is a highly developed sense of teamwork, with an exceptionally effective leadership team, whose enthusiasm and commitment is reflected throughout the school. They have high standards and ensure that there is a consistency of approach that means every child has the same high quality experiences and access to the full curriculum. This is why pupils achieve as well as they do. Self-evaluation is at the core of the school's work, and is carried out by every member of staff in some way every day. This builds up a very accurate picture of the school's performance, although at times leaders are a little modest in their judgements about their own effectiveness. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school, and ask searching questions, wanting to know what the benefit will be for pupils of any proposed changes.

Effectiveness of registered day care

Grade: 2

The new after school club meets all National Standards for out of school care and has made a good start. Parents are pleased with the provision and their children are cared for well. The club is organised very well. All policies and procedures, including a complaints log, are in place and conveyed effectively to parents in an attractive booklet. Keeping children safe is central to the work of the club. There is a rigorous recruitment policy and all staff are checked thoroughly for their suitability before working with the children. All staff have very good levels of qualification and a clear understanding of child protection, hygiene, health and safety and risk assessment procedures.

Relationships between children of different ages and with the staff are very good. Staff ensure children behave well by providing interesting things for them to do. Children of different ages play well together, but staff also ensure older children do not interrupt inappropriately the play of the younger children. They benefit from playing in a colourful and welcoming environment. Weather permitting, children can play indoors or out of doors. They can enjoy a quiet area too if they wish. Space and resources are organised appropriately and children can select easily the items they need. Staff have taken into account children's views of the activities they wish to find at the after school club. They plan carefully for a sufficient, different, range of activities, to be available each week. These promote creative and social skills as well as opportunities for children to cooperate or do something on their own. These activities

are well-suited to the younger children, but are not always sufficiently challenging for the older ones.

Children really appreciate the time they spend in the club, meeting and playing with children older or younger than them. They enjoy eating their healthy snacks at the table, practising their social skills, demonstrating good manners and talking about things that have interested them. Children are confident, show good levels of self esteem, are happy and enjoy talking to staff and involving them in their games. Some are reluctant to go home when their parents arrive early to collect them. The children know the routines of the club, but are not involved sufficiently in helping to set it up and tidy away before they go home.

Since the provision was registered in October 2006 there have been no complaints about the registered day care that required Ofsted or the school to take action so that the day care continued to meet the National Standards. The school is required to keep a record of complaints about the registered day care made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints about the registered day care other than those made to Ofsted.

Recommendations or actions to improve the registered day care

- improve the range of activities available to offer greater challenge to the older children
- involve children more in tasks that enable them to make a greater contribution to the running of the club

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	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	2
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	3
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	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

The effectiveness of the registered day care

The quality and standards of the registered day care	2
How effective is the day care in helping children to be healthy?	2
How effective is the day care in protecting children and helping them to stay safe?	2
How effective is the day care in helping children to achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
How effective is the day care in helping children to make a positive contribution?	2
How effectively is the day care organised?	2
Does the day care meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides?	Yes
Has the day care improved since the last inspection?	NA
Does the day care require enforcement action?	No
Does the day care require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. Yours is an outstanding school, with very many strengths. Here are some of them.

- You make extremely good progress in your work.
- The teaching is outstanding because the lessons are interesting and fun and teachers know exactly what they want you to learn.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you are very keen to learn and work hard.
- You have a wide range of activities to enjoy, both inside and outside the classroom, including the after school club, and this gives you a great desire to learn.
- You have a very good understanding about living a healthy lifestyle and keeping safe.
- You support one another outstandingly well, such as when you are play leaders or members of the school council.
- You are extremely well looked after and teachers give you outstanding guidance and support in your learning.
- The school is extremely well run by the headteacher and her team.

You do particularly well in writing. The standards you reach in mathematics are not quite so high, and I believe if you did more real life problems using the knowledge that you have about numbers, you could get up to the same levels. You may like to discuss your progress with your teachers, as they are very interested in how well you are doing.

Thank you once again for your help. You can be very proud of your school.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. N. Butt, Lead inspector.