



Gidea Park Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102308
Local Authority Havering
Inspection number 286334
Inspection dates 31 January –1 February 2007
Reporting inspector Judith Dawson

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Lodge Avenue
School category	Community		Gidea Park
Age range of pupils	4–11		Romford RM2 5AJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01708 743801
Number on roll (school)	315	Fax number	01708 742186
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Councillor E Munday
		Headteacher	Mrs B Rowland-Frank
Date of previous school inspection	19 November 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized primary school serves pupils from mainly advantaged families and the number of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. Very few pupils have English as an additional language and a very small number of these are in the early stages of speaking English. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is well below that normally found nationally. The school has strong musical and sporting traditions and has been successful in local and national competitions. It holds a number of awards including Investors in People, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Sport England Active Mark and the B.T. School's Award.

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 features. The staff and governors work together extremely well to create a school where pupils' personal development and wellbeing, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. The hard work, teamwork and obvious enjoyment pupils demonstrate when performing their high quality music helps them to develop high self-esteem and a strong sense of community. The wide range of extra curricular opportunities enriches pupils' learning. There are excellent links with the community and other schools. Parents and pupils are proud of their school and pupils love to learn. The care, guidance and support pupils receive are outstanding.

Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and exceed the goals expected by Year 1. Standards in Year 2 have risen in recent years and are now well above average. This represents high achievement in Years 1 and 2. Standards are above average overall by Year 6. Pupils are now achieving well, especially in English, after a dip in achievement over the last three years. Pupils in the early stages of learning English and those with learning difficulties or disabilities also achieve well because of the good provision for their needs.

Teaching and learning are good and are outstanding in some lessons. Teachers give their pupils very good support in lessons, enabling them to make good progress. However, few teachers give pupils sufficient written guidance, especially in mathematics. This prevents pupils taking responsibility for their work by understanding how they can improve or extend their learning. This limits the impact of the good class teaching on pupils' achievement, especially in the junior classes. In the Foundation Stage, children are taught basic skills well and have access to a good curriculum. However, there are missed opportunities for children to select their own materials and make choices.

There is a rich and varied curriculum with outstanding opportunities for music and sport. Pupils' personal, social and health education is catered for very well, giving pupils a good understanding of healthy living and how to keep safe. Basic skills are provided for well and pupils have good opportunities to use these skills, preparing them well for their futures.

The school is well led and managed. Staff are deployed effectively to provide good support for pupils, informed by tracking pupils' progress. There are good plans for school improvement, based on accurate analysis and understanding of the school's needs, involving all members of the school community. Measures to raise achievement in the juniors are beginning to have an impact. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership in the development of community links and music and in creating a united workforce. She is supported by exemplary governors who take a full and active role in the life of the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teachers' marking to ensure pupils take some responsibility for improving their work and understand what they need to do next.
- Provide more opportunities for children in the Reception Classes to make choices in the way they do their work and the materials they use.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The good teaching and curriculum ensure that children achieve well in the Reception classes, especially in developing their skills of reading, writing and numeracy. Pupils build on these skills in Years 1 and 2 and make rapid progress, so that standards are well above average by the end of Year 2. The dip in pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 over the last three years was influenced by less effective teaching during their junior years. This has been addressed. The present pupils in Year 6, who were not affected, are achieving well in English, mathematics and science and standards are above average and improving. However, pupils' achievements in the infants and their high quality music show there is the potential for greater achievement in these subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils thoroughly enjoy the wide range of opportunities offered to them in school and, as a result, have excellent attitudes to learning. Relationships are extremely good. Pupils have high self esteem and value the beliefs and cultures of others. Their outstanding achievements in musical performance, which they share with the community, help to foster responsibility and consideration for others. This develops a strong sense of citizenship and prepares them well for the future. Behaviour is outstanding and pupils take their pastoral responsibilities very seriously. As a pupil said 'We have duties to help each other and our school'. Attendance is above average. Excellent opportunities for sport and their many sporting successes demonstrate their understanding of how to maintain healthy lifestyles. Pupils appreciate the opportunity to eat fruit at playtime and healthy school lunches and have a clear understanding of how to keep safe. In the Foundation Stage, children rapidly learn what is expected of them and behaviour and relationships are very good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Outstanding relationships between teachers and pupils provide a secure platform for learning. Precise questioning in lessons extends pupils' learning and pupils are focused

and highly attentive. Teachers challenge the pupils very well enabling them to make good progress. Good use of the interactive whiteboards generates pace and sparkle. Learning support assistants work well with teaching staff and support pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and in the early stages of learning English. Work in the lessons is closely matched to pupils' needs. However, pupils' books are often untidy and handwriting deteriorates. Teachers' marking rarely gives pupils enough written information about what they need to do to improve their work. Nor does it challenge them sufficiently to explore ideas further. Pupils have targets but have little input into what these are or opportunities to set their own. Teachers and teaching assistants in the Reception classes support children very well, but sometimes careful preparation of materials and constant support inhibits opportunities for children to experiment and make choices.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is a good curriculum which caters for all subjects well and is adapted to include good use of the locality and environment. There is an exemplary range of well-attended clubs, visits and visitors to the school that extend learning and enjoyment. The excellent provision for music gives pupils many opportunities to share their talents. Pupils performed at the opening of a new hotel in the community. As a pupil commented 'Our school is great at the extra bits.' Good curriculum links and transition arrangements prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education. There is a good curriculum for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) although opportunities for pupils to use these skills independently are not well established. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and English as an additional language is good. The very good personal, social and health education provided makes a significant contribution to pupils' outstanding personal development and wellbeing. The Foundation Stage curriculum supports children's learning of basic skills well, but planning for independent learning is less effective.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All staff provide outstanding role models for the pupils. Their high commitment to the school and the care of the pupils provide a safe haven for those in their care. Staff trained for the Childline project, initiated by the governing body, give training to others to enhance pupils' welfare. Pupils have a wide range of pastoral responsibilities, for which many are trained. They say there is always someone they can share their worries with. All government requirements for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of pupils are met and all staff are trained in child protection and first aid. Governors are fully informed of all aspects of health and safety. Although the academic guidance given to pupils is an area for development, there are good systems for tracking pupils' progress and effective intervention to support pupils' needs, ensuring they achieve well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall and there are some outstanding features of both leadership and management. The headteacher and management team work extremely well together and ensure that the school's outstanding ethos, the high levels of musical performance and extensive range of learning opportunities are maintained. They have built excellent links with the community, other schools and training institutions. They monitor teaching and learning and support teachers well. The management team have grouped pupils by ability in English and mathematics to help improve achievement. This is having an impact but more needs to be done to ensure teachers give pupils some responsibility for their learning. Leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Plans for development are good and firmly rooted in improving pupils' achievement. Governance is outstanding. Governors are knowledgeable and fully involved in school life, supporting, challenging and monitoring performance rigorously. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in areas such as ICT, the accommodation and teaching time. These improvements, combined with the good support leaders provide to improve teaching and learning ensures a good capacity to improve further.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

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	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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?	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	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 all very much for your help and friendliness during our visit to your school. We think your music is fantastic and thoroughly enjoyed your performances. It is very rare to have such a treat when we visit schools. A special thanks to those of you who talked to us.

You told us how much you enjoy your school, especially all your clubs and activities. We agree that your school gives you excellent opportunities to show how good you are at music and sport as well as lots of other interesting things to do. You told us that you work hard, take care of each other and are well cared for in school. We think your behaviour is excellent and saw how hard you work in your lessons. We agree that everyone in school cares for you extremely well, helping you to keep healthy and happy in school.

You have good teachers and some lessons are outstanding, ensuring that you learn as much as you can. In the tests in Year 6, you do better than children in many other schools. We can see how much you enjoy lessons and appreciate your teachers' help. We have asked your teachers to give you more information when they mark your books. This will help you understand what you need to do to make your work better and point you in the right direction to help you find out new things. We know that many of you could decide for yourself what you need to do to improve your work. Some of you told me that you know your work and handwriting could be much neater. We agree! Do your best to wow your teachers with beautiful work.

Grownups in the Reception classes teach you well and you learn new things quickly. You are especially good at learning how to use numbers and shapes and learning to read and write, as well as how to behave well in school. We have asked your teachers to let you decide for yourselves what tools you use and how you make things more often, so you can find out what is best for the job you are doing.

You have a good school which is well led and managed. You have every right to be very proud of your music and sport. I am sure that when you become more involved in planning your learning, your achievements in every subject will be even higher.

Best wishes

Mrs Judy Dawson Lead inspector