



# The White Bridge Junior School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114867  
**Local Authority** ESSEX  
**Inspection number** 290064  
**Inspection dates** 18–19 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs. Mary Summers

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

|   |                    |                         |                      |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                     | Junior             | <b>School address</b>   | Greensted Road       |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Community          |                         | Loughton             |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 7–11               |                         | Essex IG10 3DR       |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed              | <b>Telephone number</b> | 02085085772          |
| <b>Number on roll (school)</b>            | 219                | <b>Fax number</b>       | 02085320164          |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body | <b>Chair</b>            | Mrs.Linda Babbington |
|   |                    | <b>Headteacher</b>      | Mrs. Katherine Ward  |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 26 February 2001   |                         |                      |

|                  |                         |                          |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Age group</b> | <b>Inspection dates</b> | <b>Inspection number</b> |
| 7–11             | 18–19 September 2006    | 290064                   |

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school draws pupils from the local area. It has a higher proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups than the national average. Pupils represent a range of social and economic backgrounds. Most transfer from the infant school which shares the site. There has been significant turnover of staff over the last two years. A new headteacher was appointed in April 2005.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Standards are average at the end of Year 6. Achievement overall is satisfactory. Progress however, varies considerably from year to year because of differences in the quality of the teaching that pupils receive. The headteacher is aware of these inconsistencies and has already begun to tackle some of them. Pupils' behaviour has been a significant area of concern in past years. Indeed, this contributed to the sharp drop in the results of Year 6 pupils in the national tests in 2005. The new headteacher has addressed this swiftly and now behaviour is good. Clear rules have been established and pupils and their parents are reminded of these regularly. The calm, purposeful atmosphere around the school ensures a firm focus on learning. Pupils enjoy school and work together well, learning how to remain safe and healthy, and become responsible citizens. The school has worked hard to raise standards since the 2005 results. Some useful systems have been introduced to check pupils' progress more thoroughly throughout the year. These identify pupils who are underachieving and trigger strategies to help them catch up. Last year for instance, intensive support for some Year 6 pupils enabled them to reach nationally expected levels. A good proportion exceeded these levels in English, showing the effectiveness of the teaching. The headteacher has been encouraging teachers to plan more effectively to meet the different needs of pupils in their classes and this is showing early signs of success. It is done well in Year 6, where teachers' expectations are high and the work set matches pupils' abilities. This is not always the case in other classes where insufficient thought is given to meeting the needs of the most and less able pupils. The headteacher has already had a good impact on the school's work. Standards and behaviour have already improved because of actions taken last year. She and her deputy headteacher monitor the school's performance adequately and they have a fair idea of what needs to be developed. However, these monitoring systems are not focused sharply enough to secure really rapid improvement. The senior leadership team is only recently formed and is not yet having a significant impact on school improvement. Similarly, many subject leaders are new and have yet to take an active role in monitoring and evaluating the impact of curriculum innovations. Its performance in this respect is inadequate. Before its next section 5 inspection, Ofsted inspectors may visit the school to monitor the progress that it has made in remedying this weakness. The school would receive two to five days notice of such a visit.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that teachers use the data from tests, assessments and marking to plan work which meets the needs of different pupils more closely.
- Monitor and evaluate teaching and the impact of the curriculum innovations more effectively, taking swift action to improve areas of weakness.
- Ensure that senior leaders and subject managers fully develop their roles and play an active part in improving school performance.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Before 2005, Year 6 pupils reached broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. In 2005, however, standards plummeted in all three subjects. They were significantly lower than those expected nationally. As a result of some useful innovations adopted last year, provisional data suggests that standards rose again to broadly average levels in 2006. Considering pupils start in Year 3 at average levels for their age, their overall achievement is satisfactory. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds also achieve appropriately. They make the best progress in Year 6 where the teaching is good and the work set matches their different needs. Progress in other years varies considerably and depends entirely on the quality of the teaching. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress when supported individually or in small groups. However they do less well when catered for in a whole class situation because their needs are often not met effectively.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now average. Pupils enjoy school and try their best, even if the work set is not always particularly challenging. They respond eagerly to teachers' questions in lessons, working together well and respecting one another's ideas. They take their responsibilities seriously, one Year 6 girl remarking 'Now we are the oldest, we have to be good examples for the other children.' Through their work on the school council and the support they give to the wider community, pupils are gaining useful skills to stand them in good stead for the future. Pupils feel safe and are confident that any problems are dealt with quickly. In developing sound healthy lifestyles, most are aware of eating sensibly.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but there is great variation in practice across the school. Some teachers plan work at different levels to ensure that the most able are extended and the least able supported. They use the information generated by tests, assessments and marking to ensure that the work they set helps the pupils take the next steps in their learning. Unfortunately, this is not the case throughout the school. In one mathematics lesson for example, the most able pupils completed their number problems easily and quickly. Their levels of skill had not been taken into account when the lesson had been prepared and they learned little from the activity. Teachers usually start their lessons by stating clearly what they expect pupils to learn,

in language they understand. This has been an area of focus for teachers and, most, though not all, are doing this well. 'Today, I want you to start to use WOW words in your sentences,' instructed one teacher. The teacher referred constantly to this during the lesson, adding in other targets, for example the use of quotation marks, to challenge the pupils. The pupils knew exactly what they had to do and worked hard, most achieving the objective by the end of the lesson.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The school's curriculum is satisfactory. All subjects are covered and additional activities, such as drama productions and visits make learning interesting for the pupils. The annual residential trip for Year 6 pupils and the sound range of extra-curricular activities contribute well to their increasing levels of independence and responsibility. Talks from the school nurse and community police officer help pupils learn how to keep safe and healthy. Some good developments, including small group teaching in English and mathematics, are helping to raise standards. However, planning in other subjects is not always as sharply focused. The school is currently reviewing these to ensure that pupils build effectively on their skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support for pupils. Staff provide good role models which influence the way pupils respond to one another. Any incident of unacceptable behaviour is dealt with quickly and exclusions are reducing as a result of the headteacher's firm line on behaviour. Regular checks are carried out to ensure pupils remain safe. The school promotes a healthy lifestyle, selling only healthy snacks at playtimes. However, there is still some work to be done with parents to ensure that the packed lunches they give their children, contain healthy options. Pupils' books are marked regularly and encouraging comments often made but there is little guidance given about how pupils can improve. Similarly, annual reports to parents detail their children's achievements accurately but do not give targets or advice for the future.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new headteacher and her deputy headteacher work well together and have already been successful in improving standards and behaviour in a very short space of time. They have a fairly accurate idea of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have established some useful procedures to monitor pupils' progress and teachers' performance. Governors have supported them appropriately, monitoring developments through their visits and discussions with teachers. Little has been done however, to monitor the impact of some of the innovations introduced both in the teaching and in the curriculum. Inspectors shared

the school's concerns about a particular issue concerning its site, which the governing body is seeking to address. Significant changes in staffing have meant that many subject leaders are new and have yet to take an active role in supporting school development. This is also the case with the senior leadership team, which is newly established. The school has successfully addressed all the areas identified for improvement by the last inspection. It shows a satisfactory capacity to improve in the future.





## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3   |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?   | 3   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation   | 3   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 3   |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection  | Yes |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve?  | 3 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress                              | 3 |

### Personal development and well-being

|   |   |
|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?                                  | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 2 |
| The attendance of learners  | 3 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 3 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 2 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 |

### The quality of provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?          | 3 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 3 |

<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.

## Leadership and management

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 3   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 4   |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets   | 3   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can                     | 3   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 3   |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 3   |
| 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**

The White Bridge Junior School, Greensted Road, Loughton. Essex. IG10 3DR We want to say a big thank you for your warm welcome and for sharing with us your views about the school. The other inspector and I really enjoyed chatting with you in the dining room and around the school. These are the things we found are best about your school. - You are growing up as confident, well-behaved young people who enjoy learning and know how to keep safe and healthy. - You work together well and show respect for one another's opinions and ideas. - Teachers and other adults take good care of you. We have asked your headteacher and teachers to improve these areas. - Lessons need to be planned to make sure that you all make good progress and that you don't find the work too easy or too hard. - The people in charge need to do more checks to see how well you are being taught and how well you are learning. I know that you will continue to work hard and I wish you every success in the future.