

Ardleigh Green Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102270
Local Authority	Havering
Inspection number	307952
Inspection date	9 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Peter Sudworth

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	354
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr William Jennings
Headteacher	Mr John Morris
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2004
School address	Ardleigh Green Road Hornchurch RM11 2SP
Telephone number	01708 443014
Fax number	01708 454623

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school with a particular focus on the following: confirmation of the school's continuing strong performance in the standards reached, assessment of the school's two information technology systems; one that supports school self-evaluation and the other that enables pupils to revise and develop their learning further. Pupils' improvement in mental mathematics was also assessed.

Evidence was gathered from discussions with the headteacher, the chair of the governing body, various staff and pupils. Parents' questionnaires were analysed and visits made to lessons. Work samples and a range of documents and data were examined. Other aspects of the school were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments given in its self-evaluation were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

This larger than average junior school draws most of its pupils from the neighbouring infant school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above that usually found but the number of these pupils who speak a language other than English as their first language is below average. The school has received many awards including the ICT Mark (information and communication technology), Challenge Award (Gifted and Talented pupils), Healthy Schools, Active Mark, Arts Mark and Basic Skills.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Ardleigh Green Junior School is an outstanding school. It is extremely well led by its inspirational and enthusiastic headteacher who deservedly receives the highest respect and support of pupils, staff, parents and governors. Very effective teaching and an excellent curriculum ensure that pupils of all abilities and needs are well motivated to learn and make very good progress. Pupils' achievement is outstanding and builds on their above average attainment on entry to reach standards by Year 6 which are exceptionally high. The school consistently gains outstanding results in national tests, and does so while maintaining a broad and carefully managed curriculum, which also incorporates particular strengths in music, ICT and sport. Well planned links between subjects support pupils' very good understanding. For example, Year 6 pupils designed Tudor purses as part of their studies of the period. Teachers promote imaginatively pupils' speaking and listening skills, for example in groups in English lessons. One group thoughtfully dramatised the feelings of various family members on one of them being called to the war front. Such activities help to sensitise pupils to later writing tasks, make effective links between subjects, increase pupils' vocabulary and give them confidence to speak in front of others. Pupils enjoy the range of speaking activities and respond very well to them. They act on their peers' honest evaluations of their efforts and so improve their speaking and listening skills as a result.

Pupils have very good opportunities to learn social skills through the well-planned personal, social and health education programme. Consequently, pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to stay safe and live healthily. Some pupils act as junior road safety officers and remind pupils of road safety matters. They add support to the professional help of the local visiting police. Very large numbers of pupils engage enthusiastically in the wide range of extra-curricular activities, including many sporting activities, which support their healthy life-styles. The school educates the whole child. Pupils learn to respect one another's talents and behave with much consideration for others. The school's links with Uganda in sponsoring pupils' education ensures that they develop a global understanding of others' needs.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy all that they do in school. They work very hard in their lessons and are eager to do their best and fulfil their potential. Pupils relate very well to one another. As one pupil put it, 'I enjoy my class. We're all like little brothers and sisters.' They are extremely well prepared for their future economic well-being because of the very high standards that they reach and their regular organisation of fund-raising for various charities. The staff show a high degree of care for the pupils. The pupils are known very well through the excellent relationships that staff forge with them and their families and the very careful tracking of their progress. All pupils are known as individuals, and staff encourage them to develop their individual talents and abilities. Very good attention is given to pupils who find learning difficult and those with particular disabilities and they are an integral part of the school community. These pupils make very good progress throughout the school.

Parents are very supportive of the school. They speak glowingly of it and indicate that it provides an excellent grounding for secondary education. They find it very easy to discuss any matters of concern and feel that the school has a wonderful way of making parents feel part of the Ardleigh Green community. One parent wrote, 'Ardleigh Green School is a credit to our borough. The standard of teaching and quality of staff are both exceptional. Most importantly, the children are kept motivated and interested. Parents are encouraged to take an active role and are kept fully informed of progress and changes.'

This is a school that is genuinely at the heart of the community. It has excellent links with the infant school so that pupils' education from Reception to Year 6 is a seamless process. It also has excellent links with other education sectors in the locality and other professional agencies. Its links with business support it financially. The school is always looking forward and has played a leading role in obtaining permission and funding for a newly proposed family centre in the area. It runs several ICT courses for parents and the local community. Pupils engage fully and successfully in many local events. The school has received national recognition for the quality of its ICT work. It regularly hosts visitors from the foreign office and the department for Children, Families and Schools (DCFS). Its great strength in the provision for ICT has attracted many visitors both nationally and internationally. Pupils' competence in ICT is well above that usually found. Pupils use the 'learning platform' set up by the school extremely well to revise their work and to acquire new learning. Staff use it effectively to access and contribute to curriculum planning across the school and they contribute particularly well to the on-line self-evaluation system which promotes the school's continuing development. A particular strength of the school is its willingness to share its excellent practice. Its ICT lessons, for example, are used by many other schools locally and nationally.

School development planning is very effective. Priorities are the correct ones because all stakeholders' views are taken into account, including those of governors, parents and pupils. The school is not complacent despite the continuously good results. It rigorously analyses results for any weaker areas. For example, it noted pupils' mental skills were a weaker aspect of mathematics in 2007. It took determined action to improve these and its success is shown in pupils' sharper and more accurate responses as the year has progressed.

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Lessons proceed smoothly because they are well planned, make effective use of modern technology and pupils adopt very mature attitudes to their work. Planning is focused effectively on pupils' different needs. The success criteria that pupils can refer to when they are carrying out different types of writing or when undertaking science experiments are a very good feature of teaching. These reminders result in high quality written and practical work. One pupil wrote, 'The boy ran for his life, away from the terror that stalked him through the murky darkness. Past jagged rocks and bottomless bogs he ran stumbling but never stopping.'

Senior staff and subject leaders are very effective in their roles, keep abreast of the quality of teaching and learning and so help to maintain very good standards. Despite a very good record of standards and progress, the school is always looking to improve further. It has made excellent progress since the last inspection and has an outstanding capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no major areas for the school to address but it should continue with the minor developments on its school improvement plan.

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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

20 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ardleigh Green Junior School, Hornchurch, RM11 2SP

Thank you for your very warm welcome when I visited your school. I really enjoyed meeting you and the staff. Your parents are very pleased that you attend Ardleigh Green and I can understand why. Your school is outstanding and has an excellent record of results. I was impressed with the very good progress that you make in your lessons because you work very hard and really enjoy them. Your school's work in ICT is renowned and you benefit very well from the excellent provision in the subject. I was also very impressed with the way that you are able to access your lessons on the computer from home and revise your work.

You are developing very well as young people. You are very polite and behave extremely well. You show much respect for one another and your teachers. You engage very well, not only in your lessons, but also in all the extra activities that are provided. Your participation in these contributes very well to your fitness and health. I like the way that you are helping pupils in poor countries so that they too have a chance in life to develop their talents.

The staff take excellent care of you and work very hard under your headteacher's excellent leadership. They plan exciting work for you to do, which covers all subjects and is well matched to your needs. There are no major areas for your school to improve in, but I have asked the staff to continue with the minor improvements they wish to make which are in the school's development plan.

I trust that you will continue to work hard and reach the ambitions that you have for yourselves. Thank you once again for all the help that you gave me when I came. I shall remember my visit for a long time to come.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sudworth

Lead Inspector