

Scargill Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102282
Local Authority	Havering
Inspection number	307958
Inspection date	31 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Barry Jones

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Jones
Headteacher	Mrs K Keeper
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2003
School address	Mungo Park Road Rainham RM13 7PL
Telephone number	01708 555707
Fax number	01708 558990

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- Foundation Stage
- Achievement and standards
- Aspects of the provision that the school considered to be outstanding
- Leadership and management

gathering evidence from performance data, external monitoring, observations of teaching and the work produced by pupils. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with parents, children, the chair of governors, staff and the school improvement partner also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Scargill Infants is popular although numbers have fallen slightly in 2007. There appears to be falling rolls in the local authority generally. The school serves a mixed area socially and economically but has average levels of disadvantage overall. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is half the national average but is increasing. A few are at the early stage of learning English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Scargill Infants is an outstanding school. This is principally because of the excellent leadership provided by the headteacher and the loyal support of a talented and enthusiastic staff. Together they make a formidable team and have high expectations of themselves and the pupils. The school's mission statement is 'to educate, to enable and to empower'. This underpins the high academic standards and the excellent relationships. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. As one parent wrote, 'All the teachers and staff have a passion towards the pupils and the school. I always enjoy the curriculum evenings as this helps me to assist with my child's education.'

Children make a very good start in Reception because of the very good teaching. Teaching is outstanding overall in Years 1 and 2. Teachers are enthusiastic, plan exceptionally well and set work that makes all pupils think. Consequently, by the end of Year 2, pupils consistently attain standards that are significantly above average in each of reading, writing and mathematics. In some years, standards are exceptionally high and are more consistently so in mathematics. The school sets and meets challenging targets. Given the pupils' starting points this means that achievement is excellent. Although remaining significantly above average, provisional results for 2007 indicate a dip in performance and too few pupils attained the highest level in writing. The school takes robust action when such dips occur and has identified writing as a priority for the current year. After careful analysis, it is implementing strategies to improve writing although it is too soon to judge their impact. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities also make excellent progress overall because of the very high quality of the provision. They, too, do consistently better in mathematics than in acquiring writing skills.

A considerable strength of the school is the excellent quality of care. This starts with the class teachers and their very good knowledge of the pupils and the concern they show to them. They use the school's excellent tracking system very effectively to check how each pupil is doing. This identifies any underperformance by pupils and triggers effective action. All staff give unstintingly of their time to ensure that all pupils are able to participate fully in the life of the school. The pupils say there is always an adult in whom they can confide if they have a problem. Consequently, they feel very safe, relationships are very harmonious and they show consideration for one another. Behaviour is exemplary and stems from the positive role models set by adults. Rare incidents of bullying are dealt with very effectively. The school has striven hard to improve attendance which was the only issue raised in the previous report. Staff have successfully involved parents and other agencies and attendance is now above average. It is a further example of the rigorous approach taken by the school when standards do not come up to their own high expectations.

Pupils develop very good skills, attitudes and personal qualities that mean they are very well prepared for moving on to junior school. The good range of clubs contributes significantly to the considerable enjoyment of the pupils. There are also many excellent activities and events within the curriculum which the pupils say are fun and interesting as well as helping them to learn. As one pupil said, 'I really like school. All the things that the teachers do for us are fun and exciting. I learned a lot when we visited the National Gallery.' The school has healthy schools status and this reflects pupils' excellent understanding of related issues. It affords a high priority to developing pupils' creative abilities. Pupils respond well to these opportunities and their excellent artwork adds to the attractive environment of the school. There are inputs by experts on topics ranging from health and road safety to sculpture and a youth theatre leads

on manners and respect. This promotes an environment that encourages pupils and leads to them making their own excellent contribution. The school council is very active and say that their views are valued. Pupils also support well the local hospice and other charities.

The school makes an excellent contribution to the community. Staff from the school are frequently used by the local authority to lead on training events and to support in other schools. The school also has strong links with higher education institutions and makes a significant contribution to the training of new teachers. Partnership with a range of agencies is excellent. This close working and collaboration contributes to the outstanding personal development and well-being of pupils. As the school justifiably says these links are 'nurtured to ensure that we can have the best for our children in the way of support, guidance and care'.

Middle managers are given highly effective training and support and make a considerable contribution to maintaining the high standards. The very high quality of leadership at all levels is a strength of the school. This is the positive outcome of the headteacher's successful strategy to 'educate, empower and enable' her staff. The governors are very supportive of the school and undergo rigorous self-evaluation to improve their working knowledge of issues facing the school. The school is not complacent. For instance, it recognises that it can extend the analyses of the wealth of data that it has to detect patterns of performance for groups of pupils. It is also reviewing its provision to take account of the growing numbers of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Given its track record, the school has excellent capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Many of the children entering Reception have received little prior formal education. Hence, they start with skills below those expected for their age. The friendly, caring ethos and sensitive induction arrangements mean they settle quickly and grow in confidence. The curriculum is planned well. There is a good balance of teacher-directed activities and opportunities for children to learn through well-structured play. Teachers use assessment data well to plan work for the children and this is a key element of the good teaching. Teaching assistants give valuable support to individuals and groups of children. The adults work well as a team and this is particularly important as some of the teachers, although experienced and skilled, are teaching this age group for the first time. The provision is well managed especially as the current year the manager has a class in Key Stage 1 which may restrict her capacity to maintain a day-to-day oversight. Nevertheless, children make very good progress and consequently, when they enter Year 1 most are attaining the Early Learning Goals expected for their age.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils achieve as well in writing as they do in mathematics.

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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
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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 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	2
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	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

7 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Scargill Infant School, Rainham, RM13 7PL

Many thanks for your help when I inspected your school recently. I agree with you and your parents that you go to an excellent school. You told me how you very much enjoy coming to school, feel very safe and the teachers make lessons fun. Some of your school council told me about the ways in which you all help. You also told me how much you enjoyed going to the National Gallery, museums and many other places of interest.

The things I like about your school are that:

- you look after one another and it feels like a family
- you do very well in your work and particularly in mathematics
- you behave very well
- you have excellent teachers
- the school is very well led by the headteacher
- you have such a wide range of clubs and visits
- you like dance, music and art among other things.

The school is always trying to do even better. I have asked the school to make sure that you progress as well in writing as you do in mathematics. For your part keep doing your best. You have improved your attendance. Try and come to school as often as possible - it is worth it!

I wish you continuing success in the future. Thank you again for making me so welcome.

Barry Jones

Lead inspector