

Upminster Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102307
Local Authority	Havering
Inspection number	307965
Inspection date	5 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Selwyn Ward

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	270
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	90
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Dave Scott
Headteacher	Mrs Linda Beck
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	St Mary's Lane Upminster RM14 3BS
Telephone number	01708 227 320
Fax number	01708 640 010

Age group	5–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and particularly investigated the provision for and progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), how well the school provides for its most able pupils, the extent to which pupils know what they need to do to improve their work, and how well school leaders monitor provision and pupils' progress. The inspectors met with pupils, some of the staff and governors. Parts of lessons were observed, parents' questionnaires and a sample of pupils' work were examined and school information, including its self-evaluation, was scrutinised. The inspectors 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 the report.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average. Each year group, including EYFS, has three classes. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with around 10% coming from a range of different minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with mostly moderate learning difficulties has been increasing but remains well below average. The headteacher was appointed in January 2006.

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. In its brochure for parents, Upminster Infant sets out as its key aim 'to offer opportunities for all and encourage children to strive for their highest possible achievement'. The school's great success is in the consistent way in which this aim has been achieved.

As a parent explained, 'The school is very well run and the children receive a very high standard of education.' This prepares the pupils very well for the next stage of their education. From the start of their time in the Reception Year through to the end of Year 2, pupils make excellent progress and reach consistently high standards because they benefit from outstanding teaching. Lessons are very well planned to meet each pupil's individual needs. This includes those who need extra help with their learning because of their moderate learning difficulties, as well as the many able pupils. In reading, writing and mathematics the number of girls and boys who attain the higher Level 3 in their Year 2 assessments is around twice the national average. Pupils make such rapid progress, in these as well as in other subjects, because teachers' expectations are high. Their questioning helps to draw out pupils' explanation of their thinking and so helps to increase the pupils' confidence. School leaders have identified, however, that this is an aspect of the already good curriculum that they would like to develop further, including ambitious and well-focused plans to introduce more opportunities for pupils to use their 'thinking skills'.

Pupils' outstanding personal development is very evident in their very positive attitudes to learning. Again, this reflects well the school's aim, as even the youngest children 'strive for their highest possible achievement'. Pupils are enthusiastic in lessons and their great enjoyment of school is palpable. Pupils feel very safe at school because they are looked after very well. They get on very well with each other and are confident that any playground disagreements or rare incidents of silly behaviour will be sorted out by the staff. Not all pupils, however, have as clear an understanding as they could of how they can make their work even better. This is because marking varies in quality. Not all marking gives pupils a clear indication of how to improve. Not all of the pupils know the targets that they have for writing and mathematics.

Pupils learn an increasing amount about the wide range of cultures that make up modern Britain. They are keen to take part in the good range of clubs on offer that help to enrich the curriculum. They also enjoy the many opportunities they have to take responsibility, for example as monitors and school councillors. Even some of the youngest pupils are far from shy about voicing their opinions and offering practical suggestions for making their school even better. As might be expected from the school's success in winning an award for its 'healthy' status, pupils have an excellent appreciation of the need for exercise and a healthy diet. Year 1 pupils politely admonished one of the inspectors when he told them he liked to eat chips. They patiently explained that chips were an unhealthy food because they contained too much salt and fat.

The school has built well on the strengths identified in the last inspection report and it has secured great improvement in the areas that that report identified for development. In particular, the school now has a much closer working relationship with parents, who describe themselves as 'well informed about what goes on', not least due to the helpful website that guides them on how they can support their children's learning at home. The school's very strong track record of success is due to the outstanding leadership and management of the headteacher, school leaders and governing body, who work exceptionally well together as a team. They carefully,

monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all that the school provides, to look out for ways of making things even better. It is their lack of complacency that has led the school to assess too modestly its overall effectiveness, but it nonetheless clearly demonstrates Upminster Infant's excellent capacity for continued improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children make outstanding progress in EYFS because they benefit from excellent teaching and support in the exceedingly well run Reception classes. Children generally join EYFS with skills and capabilities that are a little above those expected for their age. By the end of the Reception Year almost all of the children are working securely within the early learning goals, with a significant number exceeding them. A parent summed up the views of many in commenting, 'I am delighted with the start my daughter has had.' Close liaison with the playgroups from which the children transfer ensure that children are helped to settle quickly into school as well as to build on what they have learnt before. The children are very happy in school and they greatly enjoy the wide range of stimulating activities that promote their learning and development. They grow in confidence in the warm and caring environment that the school provides. Teaching is very carefully matched to children's needs, so that each of them is helped to learn through play in activities that they choose for themselves as well as in lessons that are more formally taught.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all marking gives pupils clear guidance that shows them what they need to do to improve their work.

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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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
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?	2

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

18 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Upminster Infant School, Upminster, RM14 3BS

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. Some of your school councillors told us you thought your school was really great. We agree. Yours is an outstanding school. It is very well run and you all benefit from excellent teaching that helps you to do very well from the start of the Reception Year to the time you leave at the end of Year 2. You told us how much you enjoyed all the interesting things you get to learn about and the various clubs so many of you go to.

What a friendly school yours is. We were pleased to see how well you all get on with each other. It was good to learn that on the odd occasion when children quarrel, your teachers quickly sort things out. Some of the Year 1 children helped me to learn about eating a healthy diet. No more chips for me!

Although your teachers mark your work regularly, not all of the marking helps you enough by telling you what you need to do to make your work even better. That is something that we have asked the school to improve. You can help, too, by making sure that you know your targets in writing and in mathematics and that you do your very best to achieve them.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Selwyn Ward

Lead Inspector