

# Garland Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109858
<b>Local Authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	310123
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Keith Williams

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	237
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr D Lister
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs H M Powell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 June 2004
<b>School address</b>	Clay Hill Road Burghfield Common Reading RG7 3HG
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 983 2776
<b>Fax number</b>	0118 983 5778

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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: the extent to which pupils, particularly Year 6, are on track to reach their targets; how well pupils are informed about their learning; and how effectively governors contribute to strategic management.

Evidence was gathered from: lesson observations, discussion with staff, pupils and a governor, the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and documents. 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

Most pupils at this average sized school are from White British backgrounds. A below average proportion is eligible for free school meals. More pupils are identified with learning difficulties or disabilities, or are in receipt of a statement of special educational need, than is found in most schools. These include pupils with specific learning difficulties and autism. The school has a number of national awards, including the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Activemark, Artsmark, Healthy Schools and Investors in People awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Garland is a good school in which pupils achieve well to reach above average standards. The school places a strong and successful emphasis on providing outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils. As a result, most pupils enjoy school, behave well, work hard and make good progress in their all-round development. Most parents are supportive of the school, one commenting, 'I feel every effort is made to make sure my child feels happy...the school is giving her every opportunity to reach her full potential.'

Very strong leadership from the headteacher provides the school with a clear sense of direction. Staff share the drive to improve the provision and raise standards. The capable senior team provide good support; their roles are clear and they make a good contribution to school improvement. Processes to monitor and evaluate the school's work are excellent and, as a result, the leaders have a very clear understanding of what is working well and what can be improved. A very close check is kept on pupils' progress. Assessment systems are comprehensive and the information gained is used extremely well to identify pupils at risk of underachieving, target extra help where it is most needed and set very challenging targets. Consequently, teachers have a good understanding of pupils' capabilities and they plan work carefully to meet pupils' differing needs. As one parent put it, 'I am particularly impressed with how well the school caters for individual talents and strengths.' Well organised adult support, excellent links with outside agencies and a carefully modified teaching programme ensure that pupils with special educational needs, including those with specific learning difficulties, achieve as well as their classmates. Provision for gifted and talented pupils, too, is very good.

Pupils' attainment, when they first join the school, varies from year to year. Taken overall, it is just above average. A combination of good teaching and pupils' positive attitudes ensures that, whatever their starting points, they make good progress. An important consequence of the school's work to raise standards is that national test results for pupils in Year 6 have risen steadily in recent years and, in 2006 and 2007, were significantly above average. In addition, above average proportions of pupils reached the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics. This is a direct outcome of the school's work to provide a consistent level of challenge for higher attaining pupils. Of particular note is the improvement in writing, a weakness identified in the last report. Underpinning this success is improved marking, particularly the use of 'success ladders', which help pupils to assess their understanding, and increased opportunities for pupils to write for a variety of purposes in a range of subjects. The school has recognised that standards in science, although just above average, are not as high as those in literacy and numeracy. They have identified what needs to be done, particularly to increase the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5, and are well placed to turn their attention to this subject.

Teachers ensure that pupils are well informed about their learning. They provide very good quality written and verbal feedback, set clear targets for pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy and there are many opportunities for pupils to assess their own progress. As a result, pupils, particularly the older ones, have a detailed knowledge of how they are doing and what they need to do to improve. This has been instrumental in raising standards and, for example, is enabling pupils currently in Year 6 to be well on track to meet their targets.

Care and pastoral support are of high quality, too. Rigorous checks are kept on the suitability of staff to work with children, and a thorough assessment is made of the potential risks in school-based activities and visits further afield. Discovering that some pupils felt unsafe at

school, the immensely proud and influential school council helped to take steps that have improved site security and have contributed to pupils' sense of well-being. The broad and rich curriculum adds well to pupils' enjoyment. They particularly appreciate the very good range of visits and visitors who enhance their learning. As a result, pupils are well prepared to be citizens of the future. They make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, although their knowledge of cultures other than their own is patchy. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lives and they enjoy the well organised lunchtime activities.

Governors have improved their role. There are well organised systems for them to see the work of the school for themselves. They have suitable plans to develop this further by, for example, reviewing their collective and individual skills and using this information to plan future training needs. Although the school has a suitable range of activities to consult with parents, a small number feel that their views are not taken sufficiently into account. The leaders' track record of improvement and their accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness mean that they are well placed to tackle this and to secure further improvement.

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

- Implement plans to raise standards in science, building on the success in literacy and numeracy.
- Explore ways of seeking and acting upon parents' views.

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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?	2
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	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	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

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 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	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	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

27 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Garland Junior School, Reading, RG7 3HG

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking to you and watching you work and play. Special thanks go to those of you who met with me to give me your views. I am writing to tell you what I found out.

Many of you, along with your parents and teachers told me that you go to a good school, and I agree. Your headteacher and staff work hard to make sure that you are very well cared for and are able to do your best. They keep a close check on your work. They are excellent at looking at your assessments and seeing what you are doing well and where you might need help. Some of you told me how helpful you find their comments when teachers mark your work and I was very impressed by how much you know about how you are doing and what your targets are. Well done. This is one of the reasons why you are making good progress. Well done to the school council, too. You really make a difference and you are right to be proud of your work. I was pleased to see that you have so much to do at lunchtime. You understand how to be healthy and lots of you play energetically and sensibly.

Even though your school is good, your headteacher and other staff are determined that it will become even better. There are two things I have asked them to do. You and your teachers have worked very hard to improve your work in English and mathematics, and your writing, especially, is very pleasing. Your teachers have good plans to improve your work in science, too. Please make sure that you carry on trying hard with your work in all of your subjects and behaving well, because this is the best way you can help your teachers. Most of your parents told me how they are pleased with the school, but a few parents do not feel that the school takes enough notice of their views. The school is going to explore ways of improving this. Please help by remembering to pass on any messages or letters that you are asked to take home. Perhaps your school council can come up with some even better ideas.

Thank you again and I wish you good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Williams

Lead Inspector