

Arthur Bugler Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114850
Local Authority	THURROCK LA
Inspection number	311729
Inspection dates	4–5 December 2007
Reporting inspector	George Falconer HMI

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	124
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Anjie Gaywood
Headteacher	Mrs Denise Oakley (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2003
School address	St James Avenue East Stanford-le-Hope Essex SS17 7BQ
Telephone number	01375 677079
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Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Arthur Bugler Infant School is smaller than average compared to schools nationally, with 124 pupils on roll at the time of the inspection. It serves mainly private housing and the percentage of pupils on free school meals is much less than found nationally. Very few of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and there is only a very small percentage whose first language is not English. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is less than the national picture. Attendance rates are generally good. Attainment on entry is at the expected level.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory with some good elements, including the good team spirit that exists among the whole staff. The chair of governors is supportive and is involved in the life of the school.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders and managers work hard to support the staff and pupils. However, levels of support for teachers new to the school and to the profession are not yet robust, particularly for those taking up additional responsibilities.

Achievement is satisfactory overall and attainment is in line with the national average but with some variations among and between different groups of learners. Boys' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, in writing, is below the national average and progress for both girls and boys in mathematics is demonstrating some underachievement. The school recognises the differences in achievement and attainment as points for immediate action, particularly in mathematics and English. Actions being taken by the school to raise achievement and attainment include the scrutiny of data of different groups of pupils. This now includes those children in the Foundation Stage.

Personal development and well-being are good and the school demonstrates good practice in promoting healthy lifestyles. Pupils feel safe and learn to adopt safe practices. They also learn how to enjoy their education and most display positive attitudes to learning as well as good levels of behaviour. Preparation for pupils' economic well-being is satisfactory. The social and emotional aspects of learning are taken very seriously in this school, with teaching assistants working hard to develop pupils' full potential. This is an asset to the school.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but with some good practice observed during the course of the inspection. The school recognises that it has to maintain at least good quality teaching across the school to raise achievement and attainment. Curriculum provision is satisfactory. However, provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is not yet fully meeting all pupils' needs although it has improved since the last inspection.

The level of care in school is very good and all adults see it as their duty to make sure all pupils are cared for, feel safe and secure and have an adult to turn to when there is a need. The level of guidance and support is good overall and developing well. The pupils in this school are happy to be here and they are keen to learn, with positive attitudes towards making further progress. Older pupils report that the school is a really good place to be.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Overall effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but with increasingly good practice accompanying increased resources for learning and increased technology for monitoring progress. Good use is made of the stepping stones statements of progression and children who do not achieve all of the early learning goals are generally well provided for in the transition stage into Key Stage 1. The school's own analysis of its Foundation Stage performance demonstrates the school to be in line with local authority schools but with some weaknesses still evident in communication, language and literacy. The more recent use of target tracker is impacting positively on the school's ability to pinpoint progression in learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that the main thrust of the leadership and management is on raising achievement in mathematics for both boys and girls and on raising standards in writing, particularly for boys, through closer tracking of progress and more closely focused intervention strategies.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, including greater access to ICT, so that it is at least good in all lessons across the school.
- Make sure that the senior management team is secure and that all staff, including those new to the school and new to the profession, are supported appropriately so that they are able to make a full contribution to raising achievement and standards.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils enter school with levels of attainment broadly expected for their age but with variations within the cohort. By the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage, children make satisfactory progress overall, with some making good progress. Children who still need continued support as they move into Year 1 are soon identified and supported to help them catch up, particularly in communication, language and literacy.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly in line with the national average for all subjects. Mathematics is exactly in line and reading and writing are slightly above. The picture portrays a satisfactory performance overall as pupils progress through the school. Some achieve well in relation to their starting points but others are slower in reaching their full potential. Progress made in reading is generally good, with progress in writing being satisfactory. Progress in mathematics is not as good as in writing for a good proportion of pupils. On closer examination of the test results at the end of Key Stage 1, girls score above the national average across the board and score well above the boys, whose scores in writing are still lower than the national average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are happy to come to school, where they develop as individuals but also learn to work and play together well. Attendance is good and pupils get straight on with their work as soon as they enter in the morning. Pupils state that they feel safe and secure in school and that teachers and other adults look after them well and help them with their learning. They adopt safe practices. Spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. Pupils enjoy lessons and some of them know their targets in reading. They learn to adopt healthy lifestyles and take regular exercise in physical education. The social and emotional aspects of pupils' development are robust and help them considerably in their self-confidence. A gym trail is provided for pupils to develop skills that will help them with their abilities in learning. Pupils enjoy supporting charitable causes, and this gives them a good sense of responsibility. Behaviour and attitudes to learning are good overall. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for their future economic well-being but achievement is still not high enough for all pupils.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but with some good lessons observed during the course of the inspection. Lessons are generally well planned and are geared to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Teaching is lively in some lessons but, in some instances, the pace of learning is slow and some pupils are not fully engaged or challenged. Where the quality of teaching is good, pupils respond with enthusiasm to the teacher's engaging and quick moving pace and questioning designed to move pupils forward in their learning. In other lessons, too much time is spent sitting on the floor and listening, with too little action. Pupils work well together and at a good pace when they are engaged on tasks suited to their age and abilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets requirements and there is a satisfactory level of curriculum enrichment activities, with visitors making a good contribution to pupils' overall development. An example of this is the vicar from the local church taking assembly whilst at the same time developing pupils' spiritual and social, moral and cultural awareness. Pupils state that they enjoy the school trips and that they help them with their learning. The school is now making a strong effort to further engage boys in learning by the introduction of topics to interest them and more role-play. Pupils show an increasing awareness of ICT as they move through the school but despite some recent improvements, the level of provision is not yet fully meeting pupils' needs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The level of care, guidance and support is good overall, with the level of care being very good. Pupils are well looked after and nurtured in the early stages and continue to be well looked after throughout the school. The arrangements for child protection are secure and are reviewed on a regular basis. A child protection officer has been appointed and adequately trained. The school pays due attention to health and safety and pupils feel safe from harm and from bullying. The level of guidance is good overall but there are some groups of pupils who remain in need of more focused guidance with their academic work. The school is aware of this and has quite rightly begun to put strategies in place to raise achievement and standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory and demonstrate a sound level of effectiveness in self evaluation in relation to the outcomes for pupils. At present the senior management team acts in a temporary capacity. The school is awaiting the appointment of a substantive headteacher, planned for September 2008. The current leadership and management team has done well to keep the school moving forward but realises there is more work to do. The commitment of the staff to the pupils' development is strong. The staff are a close-knit team who support each other well. Parents and carers are generally very satisfied with the school. The staff are now engaged in further developments to raise achievement and standards, and

enhance the quality of the curriculum. The staff are guided satisfactorily in their professional development and the school generates a good team ethos through shared planning and team teaching. However, support for teachers new to the school and to the profession is not yet fully in place so that they are able make a more robust contribution to teaching and learning and to leadership and management. The governing body discharges its duties satisfactorily under the leadership of the chair of governors. The school gives sound value for money and has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

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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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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 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	3
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?	2

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	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

6 December 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Arthur Bugler Infant School, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex, SS17 7BQ

Thank you very much for helping me lots when I visited your school. I think that you are very kind and considerate. You also show how happy you are to be in school and how you enjoy learning. You think your teachers and other staff are really helpful to you and that they make you feel safe and secure. You obviously like going to school. Many of you work really well to get to know more and more things in lessons. Perhaps some of you could work just that little bit harder so that you can do even better, especially in English and mathematics. I really enjoyed seeing you in class, and, when the lessons were really interesting, I could see you kept your concentration and worked very well. Children who worked in the SEAL room get on well because the learning assistants make the lessons very interesting as well as helping you to get to know yourself more.

All schools are always trying to do better to help children to learn lots of new and exciting things. Your school is no different and is now looking closely at how it can make your learning even more interesting. At the same time it is also thinking about how it can help you all to do your best possible work. Many of you enjoy using the big whiteboard in lessons and I can see how this can make a difference to the way some of you learn. You also have computers but there are not that many up to date ones for all of you. School is going to see what it can do in the future to be able to let more of you use computers, more often.

Your teachers work very well together just like most of you do. In future, the headteacher is going to look at how they can do this even more so that they will, in turn, be able to help you to learn more.

Kind regards

George Falconer HMI