

Parkhill Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133939
Local Authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	316224
Inspection dates	29–30 April 2008
Reporting inspector	John Earish

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	362
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Robert Fine
Headteacher	Mrs Dinah Smith
Date of previous school inspection	3 May 2005
School address	Lord Avenue Clayhall Ilford IG5 0DB
Telephone number	020 8550 5253
Fax number	020 8551 7479

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average junior school serves a culturally diverse area of Redbridge. Well over two thirds of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and a small number are at the very earliest stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above that found nationally, and there are fifteen children with statements of special educational need. This is well above national figures. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The school has a number of awards including Arts Mark Gold, Healthy Schools, National Association of Advisors for Computers in Education Certification and Exemplar Status for the London Grid for Learning.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Parkhill is a good school, with a number of outstanding features. It is working with determination to make all aspects of its provision outstanding. Parents agree and the very large majority are positive in their views of the school and believe their children are well provided for. One wrote, '...the school provides many opportunities to extend (the children) through music, choir, computer club and I am kept well informed of their specific educational targets'.

Pupils' personal development is good because they are well cared for and consequently feel secure and happy. They really enjoy coming to school and take great pride in all that they do. This stems from their extremely positive attitudes to learning, determination to succeed and eagerness to please. Pupils generally treat each other with respect, behave well and genuinely want to learn. Attendance is above average. There are strong partnerships with the community and with outside agencies to promote learners' well-being.

Achievement is good and continues to improve year on year. At the heart of this success lies the skilful use of the new assessment and tracking arrangements which are helping teachers to target help where it is most needed and to set work that corresponds closely to the pupils' varying needs and abilities. These detailed school records and regular assessments show that all groups of pupils are making good progress from their starting points in Year 3. Teachers now have much clearer expectations of how much pupils can achieve and are better placed to quickly address any underachievement. Standards in English, mathematics are above average and last year they were significantly so in science. Pupils in the present Year 6 are on track to achieve their challenging targets set for them in all three subjects.

Good quality teaching and learning together with an outstanding curriculum is ensuring that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make good progress. Leaders at all levels are constantly looking for innovative ways to improve the quality of provision and raise pupils' self-esteem. For example, there are many opportunities to capture their curiosity through the novel use of information and communication technology (ICT) for animation, filmmaking and video conferencing. This has a very positive effect on pupils' motivation and their self worth. This contributes strongly to their outstanding enjoyment of learning. However, there were missed opportunities in some lessons for pupils to learn independently and to show initiative, so their progress is not as rapid as it could be.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and senior staff ensure that every child is welcomed and included in the school's activities whatever their ability or needs. Self-evaluation provides an accurate diagnosis of the school's strengths and weaknesses, reflecting monitoring and analysis that are regular and accurate. Governors are now much more involved in the life of the school and in its strategic management. The resulting well-focused actions are bringing about sustained school improvement. This confirms the school's good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching consistently capitalises on opportunities during lessons for pupils to use their initiative and work independently.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average and all groups of pupils achieve well. Pupils continue to achieve high quality work in information and communication technology as recognised at the last inspection. There are also examples of very good quality work in the creative and visual arts. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress towards their targets set out in their individual education plans. Pupils with English as an additional language make the same progress as their classmates. Those arriving at the school with little or no English make good progress at acquiring new language skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils really enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. They generally behave well and have extremely good attitudes to learning. Pupils have good relationships with teachers and other adults and inspectors observed consistently good or better behaviour in lessons. The school council takes its responsibilities seriously and pupils are confident that their views are listened to.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils respect the feelings of others and have a good awareness of their beliefs. A very small minority of parents raised concerns about the behaviour of a very few of the older pupils, especially at playtime. The school has responded by putting into place appropriate measures to support these pupils and to modify their behaviour. Pupils say that they feel safe and that adults resolve quickly any concerns they may have. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe and about the importance of diet and exercise in leading healthy lifestyles.

Pupils make a good contribution to their school community by carrying out responsible jobs such as playground buddies, and through charity collections, community projects and competitions. Pupils are well prepared for the next phase of their education and to become life-long learners.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve and plan effectively to meet the needs of all learners and work closely with their teaching assistants. Consequently, pupils of all abilities have very positive attitudes to learning and achieve well. Pupils are often given challenging activities which help them to develop their thinking and express their ideas clearly. In a Year 3 literacy lesson, for example, pupils were engaged in lively discussion through role play about 'Roger Rat and the Philosopher Royal' to develop their understanding of the thoughts and actions of the characters. Pupils are increasingly involved in assessing their own learning and teachers often give them very good written and verbal feedback on what they need to do to improve. Pupils are very clear about the support they receive from teachers. One said, 'Teachers always help improve and keep trying until they are sure you understand'. Occasionally, however, teachers dominate lessons and fail to capitalise on opportunities for pupils to work independently and use their initiative in order to sustain rapid progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The great majority of learners enjoy their education and achieve well because the exceptionally broad, balanced and exciting curriculum serves them well. There is very good provision for literacy, numeracy and exceptionally good provision for information and communication technology. For example, pupils regularly make films and animations of very good quality to support their work across the curriculum. Pupils also have many additional opportunities to participate in the visual, dramatic and creative arts. All learners, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those children learning English as an additional language have equal access to these activities, which often represent and celebrate their different cultural heritages. Additionally, there are many varied opportunities for enrichment during and out of school time, which pupils enjoy very much. This includes Salsa and Bollywood dance classes, a 'Wider Opportunities' music programme and an annual Arts Festival.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The support, care and guidance of pupils are of a good standard. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are in place. The school draws fully on the expertise of a range of outside agencies to ensure that the needs of all its pupils are met. For instance, a psychotherapist supports pupils and their families with additional social, behavioural and emotional needs for two days a week. Pupils say they feel safe at school but recognise that a very few of older pupils do not always behave well especially at playtime. However, they report that adults deal with any worries or concerns they may have and involve them all in discussing the management of this type of behaviour. Academic guidance and support is of a high standard. Target setting helps pupils understand exactly what they need to do to improve their work. Older pupils, for example, are able to explain clearly and in some detail what they needed to do to improve their written work in order to achieve higher levels. They said this process helps them focus on their work and spurs them onto even greater achievements. The marking of pupils work is of a very good quality and gives pupils a clear idea of what they have achieved and how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership of the headteacher, assisted by the deputy, strongly focuses on raising standards and improving the achievement of all pupils. The senior and middle managers also share her vision for improvement and support her well. School review is thorough and results in actions to raise attainment and bring about sustained school improvement. This is because the school has clear and agreed criteria for measuring success. Teamwork is a strong feature of this school. For example, those who are more experienced are showing the less experienced coordinators how to increase their influence on the quality of teaching and learning within their areas of responsibility. All members of staff understand the part they must play in promoting equal opportunity and ensuring that pupils achieve as well as they can. The governing body is now much more involved at supporting and are good at challenging the school and in meeting its statutory responsibilities. However, governors recognise that there is still scope to review the systems for recording school information to ensure that they are more manageable.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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	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?	1
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?	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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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

13 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Parkhill Junior School, Ilford, IG5 0DB

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we came to inspect your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you about your school and looking at your work. I am writing to tell you what we think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn.

We were very much impressed with your friendliness and your helpful attitudes towards us. You listen very carefully to what your teachers have to say and learn a lot in lessons. We especially liked watching the videos and animation that you have recently produced. They were really eye catching, mesmerising and beautifully edited. We particularly liked watching the Body Electric Film Animation...Great soundtracks! You are certainly making a big impact with your use of information and communication technology.

You go to a good school that prepares you well for the next stage of your learning. To make it even better, I am asking your teachers to give you even more opportunities during lessons to use your own initiative and to work independently. You said that you really enjoy working in this way, as it is challenging and is much more fun...especially the science experiments. I agree!

You can all help by continuing to work hard to meet the targets set for you. I hope that you have great success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

John Earish

Lead Inspector