

# Whybridge Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102285
<b>Local Authority</b>	Havering
<b>Inspection number</b>	323612
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Merchant

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	169
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr C Purnell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr I Bakmann-Madsen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 February 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Ford Lane Rainham RM13 7AR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01708 551 712
<b>Fax number</b>	01708 551 712

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<b>Age group</b>	4–7
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is smaller in size than other schools and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is high. About three-quarters of pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils whose first language is other than English is similar to that typically found. The proportion of pupils identified as having (mainly moderate) learning difficulties is much lower than that found in schools nationally. The school has two Reception classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school is currently planning for a proposed amalgamation with a nearby junior school in September 2009.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Whybridge Infant is a good school. Parents endorse this and have great confidence in the school and its headteacher. As one parent said, 'The school is a very happy, inviting place for children and parents. We are lucky to have our children at such a good school - it's fantastic!' Pupils are right to be proud of their school. They confirm that they are very happy and extremely well cared for.

When children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, their skills are just below those expected for their age. They make good progress and reach levels slightly above those expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year. By the end of Year 2, standards have risen considerably and are well above average. Pupils make good progress and achieve well because procedures are securely in place to enable the headteacher, his senior team and subject leaders to monitor rigorously all areas of the school's work. Many pupils, however, are hesitant when speaking and teachers do not always give them enough opportunities to talk about what they are learning.

The headteacher, with strong support from his deputy, provides outstanding leadership which is at the heart of this good school. He has put in place several highly effective measures that have improved standards, raised achievement and improved attendance and so the school has an excellent capacity to improve further. It is already moving rapidly in the right direction and has many outstanding features. The headteacher and his staff have not let the imminent amalgamation of the school detract them from ensuring that pupils thrive and achieve well. Governors hold the school to account well for its work. The school uses its resources and accommodation imaginatively and efficiently and offers good value for money.

In addition to the very strong leadership, there are many features that contribute to pupils' good achievement. The good teaching leads to good learning. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, give clear explanations and plan their lessons well. They use assessment criteria skilfully to promote learning, to analyse and improve pupils' performance, and to set challenging targets for individuals. Teachers and support staff work very effectively together to meet pupils' specific needs. The use of questions by teachers, however, is not always sharp enough for pupils to develop their speaking skills fully. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Very good relationships and excellent care, guidance and support result in happy learners. Pupils come to school ready to learn and are eager to contribute to lessons. Their exemplary behaviour and great enjoyment of school means that lessons are conducted at a good pace and in a positive climate. However, many parents, against the strong advice of the school, take their children for holidays during term time, which leads to overall attendance that is only at the national average. Pupils' knowledge of different cultures in our diverse society is secure because community cohesion is a good feature of the school. A carefully planned and varied curriculum inspires pupils to work hard and gain a very wide range of skills.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The positive relationships between home and school ensure that children settle into the daily routine, gain confidence and start to make good progress quickly. Children enter Early Years Foundation Stage with standards below those expected for their age in speaking and listening and communication skills. They leave the Reception Year with standards that are just above age-related expectations. Children are eager to participate in all that is provided for them and

they work hard and make good progress. Good teaching underpins this good progress. Staff provide a carefully balanced programme of activities led by adults and tasks that children can choose for themselves. Core skills, including early sounds and words work (phonics), are taught well through whole-class and small-group activities. Classrooms are attractive and stimulating and effective use is made of the beautifully appointed outside learning area. Staff interact well with the children but do not always take the opportunity to ask open-ended questions to present the children with the chance to express their ideas more fully.

The coordinator provides good leadership and, with her dedicated team, plans stimulating activities that are well matched to the children's needs. Their planning is well informed by highly skilled observation and assessments and effective self-evaluation. Parents are safe in the knowledge that their children's welfare is given a very high priority and is of outstanding quality. One parent, reflecting the views of many, said 'I feel at ease when my children are in school. I have a lot of confidence in the staff.'

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

- Develop pupils' speaking skills fully by providing more opportunities for them to talk about what they are learning, and ensuring that teachers make better use of questions in class.
- Work with families to improve pupils' attendance rate by reducing the number of term-time holidays taken.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Results in teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2008 were significantly above average and have been for the past six years. Results continue to climb faster than the rate of improvement seen nationally. Pupils' work seen by inspectors and classroom observations confirm that standards are currently well above average. Pupils' mathematical, reading and writing skills are better than their speaking skills.

Given their starting points when they join the school, pupils make good progress through Years 1 and 2. This is due to consistently good teaching, careful tracking of progress and a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. There is very little difference in the progress made by the various groups of pupils in the school. This is because the school works very effectively to support pupils with learning difficulties and those who enter the school with particularly low levels of attainment.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils enjoy school, grow in confidence and develop positive attitudes to learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. They have a very well-developed understanding of right and wrong and learn to appreciate and enjoy the wonders of life around them. Relationships within the school are excellent. Pupils understand how to be safe in the community and say that bullying does not happen in school. They display exemplary behaviour. They gain a very good insight into ecological issues through membership of the Eco-schools Action Group and the various ecologically friendly initiatives adopted by the school. Physical activities are very popular and ensure that pupils develop cooperation and fitness. By the end of Year 2, pupils' well-above-average literacy and numeracy and their outstanding personal skills mean they are well equipped for the next phase of their education and beyond. Attendance

has improved as a result of the school's persistent attempts to resist requests for term-time leave. However, too many pupils still miss school for holidays during term time, which interrupts their learning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils respond well to the good teaching. Sustained challenge and high expectations enable pupils to make good progress and achieve well-above-average standards by the end of Year 2. Teaching is lively, tasks and concepts are clearly explained, and activities are imaginative and carefully designed to challenge the pupils to learn at a swift pace. Lessons are characterised by excellent relationships underpinned by mutual respect, humour and warmth. Teaching assistants are very effective in their work. Good partnerships in classrooms between teachers and teaching assistants lead to effective support for pupils who find learning hard. All pupils, whatever their learning needs, are fully included in the activities and this has a positive effect on achievement and personal development. Skilful questioning is used by the most effective teachers to draw out ideas from pupils. However, in a minority of lessons, teachers do not always use questions well enough for them to know that pupils understand their tasks, or to encourage pupils to give extended spoken answers.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The school provides an outstanding curriculum that enriches and enlivens the pupils' learning. This 'Creative Curriculum' is constantly evaluated to ensure that it meets the needs of all its pupils and its innovative approach has been particularly successful in raising boys' attainment. The high quality of planning, firmly built on pupils' prior attainment, balances basic skills, creativity, sport and social skills to make learning a thoroughly enjoyable experience for the pupils. The curriculum is enriched by visits to places of interest and by visitors to the school. The use of information and communication technology throughout the school and across the curriculum is exceptionally well developed as a tool for learning. The school has a very positive approach to ecology and has won awards for its provision. The pupils enjoy the out-of-hours activities provided by the school, especially the gardening club.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

Arrangements for child protection are very secure and the school fully meets requirements relating to safeguarding. The school works very effectively with outside agencies to ensure that all pupils are able to play a full part in the life of the school. Parents are kept well informed of their children's learning through termly meetings and the informal daily opportunities provided by the teachers. The school's very good systems for promoting behaviour ensure that pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. The school has employed a wide range of strategies to bring about an improvement in pupils' attendance, which is now satisfactory. Careful tracking of pupils' progress enables the school to target support to help the pupils achieve well. Pupils have a clear understanding of their targets and the marking of their work gives positive feedback and provides advice on how to improve further.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding because they have led to sustained improvements in the standards attained by pupils. Many members of the school community speak with delight and admiration of how the school continues to improve over the years under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher. Supported very well by a dedicated and versatile deputy, he inspires loyalty among staff, who work with clarity and enthusiasm. Leaders have created an ethos of inclusion that has enabled all pupils to flourish. Pupils have a deep and growing awareness of others. For instance, the school has fostered meaningful links with less privileged schools in other parts of London as well with schools in East Africa. Consequently, Whybridge is a harmonious school, in which pupils of all races and cultures get on very well together.

Subject leaders manage their areas exceptionally well and their rigorous monitoring is leading to steadily improving standards. Governors know the school well and ask challenging questions about what goes on because they are keen for all pupils to do as well as possible. The school improvement plan is comprehensive and shows clearly how improving the effectiveness of leadership, teaching and learning is at the heart of all it does. The school has an accurate view of its 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?	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	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

11 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Whybridge Infant School, Rainham, RM13 7AR

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. What a lovely two days we had. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you. Whybridge is a good school and is getting even better. You told us many interesting things about your school. You are right to be proud of your school. Here are some of the really good things we found out about it.

- You make good progress as you move through the school and, by the time you leave at the end of Year 2, you reach standards in all your subjects that are higher than in most other schools. This is because your teachers teach you well and you also work very hard.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you look after each other so well. You enjoy working in groups and you like to help your classmates when they find things difficult. Members of the school council work hard to find out what you think and, as a result, have made your school even better. You particularly like the very wide range of extra-curricular events and the out-of-school clubs and trips, and you take a full part in lots of arts, sports and music activities.
- Your teachers and teaching assistants take very good care of you. They make sure that everyone feels safe and secure. They also give you a lot of advice about how you can improve your work. Your outstanding headteacher and all your other teachers know exactly how to make sure that your school continues to stay so good.

We have asked your school to do these things to make it even better by working with you to make your standards in speaking higher. You can help by making sure you come to school as often as you can.

Please continue to work hard and keep helping your teachers to make sure that Whybridge becomes an even better place in which to learn. I send you my best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Michael Merchant

Lead Inspector