

Parkhill Infants' School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133938
Local Authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	328773
Inspection date	23 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Roger Whittaker

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	345
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Cowup
Headteacher	Miss Margaret Mersh
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lord Avenue Clayhall Ilford IG5 0DB
Telephone number	020 8550 1730
Fax number	020 8503 9024

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage and investigated the following areas: the achievement and standards of current pupils, the quality of teaching and learning, and leadership and management.

Evidence was gathered by observing lessons, scrutinising pupils' work, examination of assessment information and school documents, reading responses by parents to the inspection questionnaire, and holding discussions with the headteacher, teachers, pupils and the chair of the governing body. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but 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 this report.

Description of the school

Children from a variety of backgrounds attend the school. The percentage of students from Asian and various Black communities is well above average. An increasing proportion of pupils, now over two thirds, have a first language other than English, with the majority of these coming from Asian families. The number entitled to free school meals is below average and mobility rates are low. The proportion of pupils with moderate learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage consisting of two Nursery sessions and three Reception classes. The school works with the junior school to run a daily breakfast club.

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. Pupils of all abilities are consistently helped to reach extremely high levels of academic achievement and are supported to become happy, confident, caring individuals. Parents contribute considerably to children's learning and are full of praise for the school, with one describing it as 'a school which continually manages to exceed expectations'.

The personal development and well-being of pupils are outstanding. Pupils are encouraged to respect each other and to become independent learners. Behaviour throughout the school is excellent because it is so well managed by firm but caring staff. As a result, bullying and racist incidents are extremely rare and pupils feel very secure in school, trusting adults to resolve any problems quickly. Pupils love coming to school, with one saying, 'I like all the staff and the headteacher, and the fun stuff we do every day.' Their enjoyment of school, coupled with the support of parents, is reflected in the improved levels of attendance by most pupils. However, the poor attendance of some children makes it satisfactory overall. Pupils have a good understanding about how to lead healthy lives and are encouraged to exercise, both outside and through weekly physical education or 'early morning energizers'. They take responsibility by sharing their views of how to improve the school community through a very effective school council. They have high levels of basic skills and confidence, and are therefore well prepared for the next stage in their learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the diversity of society beyond the school and the immediate locality.

When they start school, most children are achieving below what is expected for their age. Many enter with limited communication and social skills. They make extremely good progress, both in their academic and their personal development. Progress continues throughout the school, so that at the end Year 2 pupils achieve well above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. This excellent progress is supported by very effective strategies to improve speaking and listening skills throughout the school. Current data suggest that pupils are on track to improve the school's overall results, particularly for the higher levels. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are extremely well supported, and make the same outstanding progress as their peers. This aspect of the school is particularly valued by parents, several of whom commented on the dedication and knowledge of staff in ensuring that each child achieves as much as possible.

Teaching is outstanding and this, as well as the excellent curriculum, has led to the consistently high academic achievement. Highly trained teaching assistants also have a very positive impact on pupils' pastoral care, enjoyment of school and academic achievement. Lessons are very well planned to take account of different abilities, and the pace is excellent. Pupils, especially those who have more challenging behaviour, are firmly but kindly managed by all adults both in and outside the classrooms. The school is aware of the need for staff to be continually updated about new strategies to improve the learning of all pupils. Pupils are very keen to learn through a curriculum that is being continually adapted to their needs. The care, guidance and support that pupils receive are outstanding. The pastoral care is excellent, as all adults are extremely knowledgeable about the pupils and their families. Safeguarding procedures are robust and regularly reviewed. Pupils are made increasingly aware of how well they are doing and how to improve by regular teacher feedback.

Leadership and management at all levels are outstanding. The excellent headteacher works with dedication and enthusiasm. She is very well supported by her staff. There is a great sense of teamwork and they continue to strive for even greater success for their pupils. As a result, the school has an outstanding capacity to improve further. Governors are knowledgeable, supportive, and yet always ready to ask challenging questions of the school. The school has recently introduced a more strategic approach to the good promotion of community cohesion. This has enabled it to evaluate its contribution to community cohesion effectively and thereby start to inform future provision.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Overall, the quality of provision is outstanding. All children, including those at an early stage of learning English, receive an extremely high standard of care and participate in very stimulating and exciting learning experiences, which facilitate their excellent progress. The Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator takes a strong lead in ensuring that children's progress is constantly monitored and assessed, and in promoting the extremely beneficial partnerships with parents and the community. Parents are very supportive of the school. One parent, typical of many, wrote 'The staff are very kind, and my son really enjoys each and every minute of his nursery hours.'

Children's attainment on entry is well below what is typical for their age, especially in communication and social skills. They settle quickly into routines, benefiting from the excellent support they receive in class and the strong links made with parents and carers. Within this safe and caring environment, children form very good relationships with each other and with adults, and are keen to learn. They gain confidence quickly, because staff include them by allowing them to be actively involved, for example through agreeing their own rules and choosing their activities and resources. The outdoor play areas cater well for all areas of learning, and provide many and varied opportunities for children to develop their independence. Indoors, the different role-play areas provide children with further opportunities to develop independence and imaginative play. The outstanding progress in all areas of learning prepares the children extremely well for the transition to Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that staff, including teaching assistants, are continually updated about current strategies to develop learning, and so continue to improve the proportion of outstanding lessons.

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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	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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	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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	2
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

06 July 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Parkhill Infants' School, Ilford, IG5 0DB

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We were impressed with how well you behaved around the school, and in particular how hard you work in classes. We enjoyed visiting your classes and talking to you about your work and the other exciting things you do at school.

We found that Parkhill Infants' School is an outstanding school which helps you to make excellent progress, from the time you join the Nursery to the time you leave at the end of Year 2. The headteacher and staff take extremely good care of you and make sure that you are safe. They pay close attention to your personal needs. The Nursery and Reception classes help you to get off to a very good start in your school life. This is because you have lots of different learning experiences provided by the outstanding teachers. Your excellent headteacher and teachers make sure that you leave at the end of Year 2 extremely well prepared and ready for your next school.

So that your school can get even better I have asked the teachers to make sure that they learn new ways of giving you even more fun and interesting things to do.

Yours faithfully

Roger Whittaker

Lead Inspector