

Churchfields Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133935
Local Authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	341415
Inspection dates	4–5 March 2010
Reporting inspector	John Mason

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 of pupils on the school roll	478
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Ann Regan
Headteacher	Ms Wendy Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The majority of time was spent observing lessons. In 20 lesson observations, all 16 teachers were seen. Other lessons were visited briefly. Inspectors looked at 125 parental questionnaires, 96 pupil questionnaires and 25 staff questionnaires. They observed the school's work, and looked at school development planning, reports from the School Improvement Partner of the local authority, minutes of meetings of the governing body and a range of policies and other documents, in particular, those relating to the safeguarding of children.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- current attainment and rates of progress and learning through the school, with a particular focus on girls and higher-attaining pupils
- the school's capacity for sustained improvement and the extent to which leaders and managers are securing improvement in the quality of teaching
- the extent to which pupils' personal development is a strength of the school.

Information about the school

Churchfields is much bigger than most junior schools. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from other backgrounds is nonetheless higher than in most schools. These pupils come from a very broad mix of ethnicities and a few of these pupils are at an early stage in learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has risen in recent years and is now close to average. The proportion with statements of special educational needs is above average. The school holds current accreditation for the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Artsmark Gold, National Healthy Schools and The London Schools Environment Award. Churchfields runs a 'breakfast club' every day before school. Childcare after school is also offered to pupils from Churchfields and its neighbouring infant school by an independent charitable organisation. This provision is inspected separately.

The headteacher has been in post since September 2009. Since September 2009, much of the outdoor area has been inaccessible, due to work re-building the school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Churchfields provides a good education for its pupils. Pupils' attainment is consistently well above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils build well on attainment which is already above average when they enter the school in Year 3 and make good progress in their learning. Because teachers know pupils very well, both through the school's excellent pastoral care and through the huge range of different extra-curricular activities they undertake with the pupils, pupils also make many outstanding gains in their personal development. Achievement is good rather than outstanding, because inconsistencies in teaching and learning, including the level of challenge to higher-attaining pupils, hold some pupils back from fulfilling their fullest possible potential.

One parent aptly noted, 'The school has a buzz about it: it is very positive and exciting ' there always seems to be something going on in addition to the normal day.' Three quarters of all pupils supplement their three hours of physical exercise with active involvement in sports clubs. Encouraged to lead activities, cook and cultivate vegetables, they are very persuasive in practising and discussing healthy life choices. Pupils' excellent contributions to their own community are supported by keen involvement and interest in the wider community. They learn different languages enthusiastically, actively initiate charitable appeals, show keen interest in each other's cultures and celebrate religious festivals with empathy for their own and others' beliefs. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

Despite the building works and the narrow corridors and stairways of the old building, pupils conduct themselves extremely well. They show high levels of respect and consideration for one another and for adults. They play and work collaboratively in the sure knowledge that there are many gains to their enjoyment of school and their learning in doing so. Their outstanding behaviour not only ensures they feel very safe, but promotes a very positive school ethos, in which pride in the achievements of all pupils is tangible. This was clearly evident in the World Book Week assemblies presented by pupils during the inspection.

The good teaching is characterised by strengths in teachers' compelling subject knowledge and strong relationships in class which underpin focused learning. Teachers have only recently started securely tracking individuals' progress with a view to planning lessons better to meet all children's needs, deploying teaching assistants more effectively and sharing individual targets with pupils in sufficient detail that they can confidently and fully understand the next steps they need to take.

Because the school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses due to

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effective self-evaluation and is acting upon addressing the weaknesses, it has a good capacity for sustained improvement. The headteacher has promptly identified strategies to build further on the established record of pupils' good progress which are being well embraced by staff. For example, a clear need has been identified to focus on investigation in science and to address inconsistencies in the provision for gifted and talented pupils. Well-considered plans are in place to address these issues. The school knows that the involvement of subject and year group leaders in using information from the tracking of pupils' progress and the monitoring of provision has not been consistent enough. Although at an early stage, improvement is already evident and middle managers are growing in accountability and effectiveness.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Aspire to the highest level of achievement by using improved practice in assessment more robustly, so that all teachers:
 - plan activities in class which are consistently challenging for the full range of abilities presented in the class
 - enable pupils to fully understand the next steps they need to take in their learning
 - direct the activities of teaching assistants in a manner which makes more focused use of their skills and expertise to support learning.
- Ensure subject and year group leaders use information from the tracking of pupils' progress and the monitoring of provision to secure greater consistency of high quality provision in teaching and curricular planning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils have consistently attained significantly above average results in tests in English, mathematics and science over a five-year period. The most recent mid-year assessments of the current Year 6 points to this trend being maintained. Data in all core subjects already show pupils' attainment above average by a greater margin than it was when they started school in Year 3. This good progress was confirmed by inspectors' observations during their visit. Standards in reading are particularly high because pupils are very well engaged by activities, such as those organised for World Book Week, where reading is supported by plenty of opportunity to explain what they have read. Standards in writing are not as high, but are rising. Overall, standards are higher in English than in mathematics or science. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language also make good progress in their learning, with some outstanding progress in reading. Although the proportion of boys in top maths sets is higher than girls, inspectors found no significant evidence of any marked variation in pupils' progress by gender. Overall, the progress of higher-attaining pupils is good, but shows inconsistencies. While some teachers provide extremely well for these pupils, their progress sometimes temporarily slows when some

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lessons do not provide them with sufficient challenge.

Pupils think deeply about their own and others' experiences. In a Year 4 class on human rights for example, one pupil recognised that, 'Just because you are poor, doesn't mean you have to be treated badly.' Such sentiment translates into a wealth of practical charitable action. The school council, for example, recently initiated an appeal which raised a substantial sum for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. The knitting club has made blankets for Churchfields' partner school in Uganda. The 'Eco-committee' has established activities which support sustainability in the community. Pupils are justly proud of the many trophies they have won in competitive sports and many take a lead in helping future teams and pupils with weaker motor skills to succeed. With large choirs and instrumental groups which frequently perform in the community, many pupils learn excellent skills of public presentation to complement their cultural and spiritual experiences. Encouraged by the range of languages taught in school, pupils also teach one another their various languages spoken at home and are enthusiastically embracing the opportunities to make 'e-pals' abroad. Everyone looks forward to the enthusiastic cookery club's presentations of international cuisine. Using computers, pupils have good skills to support progress in literacy, but those to support their mathematical development are less secure. Pupils' attendance is above average. Pupils acquire good skills for their future education and economic well-being. While the majority have above average basic skills and a good attitude to learning and teamwork, a small minority of pupils have yet to grasp the importance of punctuality.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Strong relationships between teachers and pupils support good learning very positively. Teachers are able to communicate their good subject knowledge well because pupils have excellent routines in their learning. The best teaching is very stimulating and actively empowers pupils to learn by their own initiative. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, the simple task to consider different ways in which they could use operations related to the number 36 prompted open discussion from the whole class and one boy accurately calculated and explained both how to square and obtain the square root of the number. Such lessons have pace, purpose and manageable challenge. Inspectors concurred with the school that no teaching was inadequate. However, a proportion of satisfactory teaching does not allow all pupils to succeed fully, because pupils are kept passive too long and because teachers do not use assessment information sufficiently well to plan lessons which accelerate pupils' learning from clearly identified starting points. This limits opportunities for pupils to become involved in assessing and reflecting on the quality of their own work or that of their peers. In literacy, some helpful targets indicate next steps, but this is not consistently the case. Marking is inconsistent in quality. Although all teachers mark regularly, pupils are often not shown how to improve. Teaching assistants are deployed to good effect to enable targeted pupils to make good progress, but occasionally, when lessons are teacher-directed, their impact is less effective.

While the range of extra-curricular activities and pupils' commitment to these are outstanding, the curriculum as a whole is good. Focus weeks provide pupils with many memorable experiences, but the structuring of the school day is compartmentalised. This facilitates clear blocks for the regular and constructive exposure to subjects like modern languages and music, but does not readily allow for flexible and creative links between different areas to provide a wide range of different contexts for pupils to apply their English and mathematics skills. Information and communication technology is well used to support learning and some stimulating enterprise projects have evolved from design and technology. Distinctions between provision for gifted and talented pupils and for higher-attaining pupils have until recently been blurred, weakening both teaching and the focus of the curriculum. This is improving, however.

Every inch of wall space celebrates pupils' learning and achievements, making for a very warm and welcoming environment, despite the increasing dilapidation of the old buildings. Pupils' health and safety is given very high profile and opportunities which pose risk, such as the new building works, are turned to advantage in helping pupils to understand risk better. Support for individuals with identified needs is extremely robust.

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The school's work with external agencies and families to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those requiring support in acquiring English is providing high quality support for these pupils. Pupils who have had difficulty integrating in other schools are making impressive progress socially and in their learning. The well-attended, engaging breakfast club helps pupils to settle into routines for the day very well and an equally effective lunchtime club supports pupils who may feel disinclined to play with others outside. Strong links with the feeder infant school and local secondary schools contribute significantly to the continuity of pupils' learning and well-being. Absences are rigorously and effectively followed up.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has rapidly established the respect and cooperation of staff. She has promptly identified the right priorities for the school and is succeeding well in moving the many established members of staff, who are justly proud of a good track record of high standards, to embrace important changes ahead of completion of the new learning environment currently being built. Senior leaders and staff are beginning to share assessment information well, so that pupils' progress can be better tracked from term to term in core subjects. The governing body supports and challenges the school well and is influential in determining its strategic direction. A substantial budget deficit has been cleared and the school accounts are now well balanced. Excellent, well-established partnerships with a host of agencies and organisations strongly support pupils' learning and well-being. Parents and carers are well engaged to support the activities of the school. Excellent quality assurance and risk assessment procedures contribute to an exceptionally realistic and proportionate approach to safety and safeguarding. Staff with specific responsibility for safeguarding are very well trained for their roles and carry these out with high diligence and effectiveness. Much strong inclusive practice, often emanating from pupils themselves, contributes to the school's good promotion of equal opportunities and ensures freedom from discrimination. Community cohesion is promoted very well with strong initiatives from school to international levels. A review and audit to check that all areas are covered as well as they could be is yet to be fully approved.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents' and carers' views of the school are very positive, recognising the engagement and caring manner of teachers in particular. They wholeheartedly approve of the wealth of opportunities to excel in the arts and in sport and are pleased that there are also many other clubs catering for other interests. A small number of parents and carers voice some criticism of the school's communication with them, with a small minority concerned that information is not effectively channelled. However, inspectors found that the school does much to communicate, through regular newsletters and questionnaires. A web-based system is being planned to consolidate communications. A small number of parents feel that provision for gifted and talented pupils is inconsistent, a fact which the school has recognised and is beginning to address.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Churchfields Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 125 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 478 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	67	54	55	44	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	75	60	48	38	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	28	77	62	12	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	38	64	51	11	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	70	56	53	42	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	27	71	56	18	14	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	38	69	55	5	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	46	37	69	55	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	34	62	50	12	10	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	28	73	58	9	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	18	73	58	16	13	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	29	73	58	11	9	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	50	57	46	4	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



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8 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Churchfields Junior School, Redbridge E18 2RB

Thank you very much for so warmly welcoming the inspection team which recently visited your school. We were very impressed by how much you enjoy school and how you could tell us so much about what you have been learning. Your parents and carers also helped us by completing questionnaires. Please pass on our thanks to them. You make good progress in your learning and reach high standards in your work, because you take part enthusiastically in lessons and in the many extra activities. Your behaviour in class and around the school is outstanding and helps you to learn, even when some lessons are not always as well planned as they could be. Your teachers teach you well and some can make learning very exciting. Teachers are very caring and support you with an outstanding range of opportunities for you to develop your interests outside of lessons.

You told us that you feel very safe at school. You show courtesy and respect for others. Many of you get actively involved in the many very successful sporting activities in school. Some of you take a lead in promoting activities which raise awareness of how to become and stay healthy. Many of you show concern for others or the environment by your involvement in ecological or charitable projects. The high standards you reach in music and the arts also show how well you work together with one another. We are pleased that you enjoy learning different languages and have taken steps to teach others those that some of you speak at home. These all contribute to your excellent personal development. Some of you are not always punctual to school. Punctuality is a very important for a successful future.

To make your school better still, we have asked the school to:

- help you to better understand the next steps you need to take to improve further in your learning
- aim to improve your progress and standards further by planning more consistently challenging activities for you in class
- develop the skills of subject leaders and year group leaders to make sure teachers'

planning in their areas is always of the highest quality.

Wishing you all continued success

Yours sincerely

John Mason

Lead inspector

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