

Whybridge Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102284
Local Authority	Havering
Inspection number	355165
Inspection dates	21–22 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Jo Curd

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Turner
Headteacher	Christopher W Hobson
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Nineteen lessons were observed including all five of the school's teachers, and meetings were held with parents, pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at local authority reports, assessment records, policies relating to safeguarding pupils' health and safety, pupils' books, planning, the school improvement plan and 54 parental questionnaires.

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

- The consistency of progress of pupils in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching and how effectively leaders and managers are acting to improve it.
- How well the school safeguards the health and safety of all pupils.

Information about the school

Although the school's size and make-up is broadly in line with the national average, different year groups vary quite considerably in ethnicity and attainment of pupils. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds and/or learning to speak English as an additional language is rising rapidly but is slightly lower than the national average, as is the number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Around 80 per cent of pupils are of White British descent, and the second biggest ethnic group is of Black African heritage. The number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average; most of these have moderate learning difficulties, and currently no pupils have statements. A very small minority of pupils are looked after by the local authority. The deputy headteacher took up this post in September 2008 and has spent two terms as acting headteacher since then. The current headteacher joined the school in January 2010. The school hosts a breakfast club run by an outside provider.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory level of education for all its pupils. Following a time of staff turbulence, provision is becoming more stable and rapidly improving. Effective care, guidance and support contribute to pupils' good behaviour and attitudes. Staff work hard, and are happy and committed to school development and improvement. The vast majority of parents and carers who were spoken to or who responded to the inspection questionnaire are happy with the school. One commented, 'The leadership team are always available and approachable and are genuinely interested in the children and their opinion of things.'

Since the last inspection several experienced staff, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher, have left or been on periods of leave. For various reasons, including possible school reorganisation, they were temporarily replaced by contract staff of varying experience and competence. Although published results of national tests at the end of Year 6 indicate that progress across science and mathematics remained satisfactory, a drop in the quality of teaching caused this to slow and become uneven between classes. Consequently, pupils' attainment also fell. Progress is now picking up so that the attainment of pupils who just left the school reached higher levels in mathematics and science than were reached last year. In English, pupils make better progress and they reach above average standards.

The new headteacher has a very accurate understanding of the school through accurate self-evaluation. This leads to a clear, well-focused vision for its improvement. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are working well together to support staff, particularly those new to their roles, and to embed their strong ambition and drive improvement. Leaders and managers have already addressed some deficiencies in the school building, including replacing the entrance foyer, windows and roofs and improving school grounds. Through systematic monitoring, the quality of teaching, the effectiveness of assessments and the accountability of all staff are having a positive impact on pupils' progress, but there is still scope to improve. As one parent said, 'I have seen an improvement in behaviour and children's involvement since the new leadership took place.'

The quality of teaching, although improving, remains inconsistent between classes. As a result, not all pupils always achieve as well as they can. Occasionally, teachers talk too much, slowing pupils' active involvement in their learning. Activities are sometimes too easy or difficult for some pupils and they do not always know how to improve or extend their learning. All required subjects are included in the curriculum. These tend to be taught separately, however, and meaningful, relevant links between them are sometimes missed.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress, especially in mathematics and science by:
 - improving the quality and consistency of teaching through the school
 - planning more opportunities for pupils' active involvement in lessons
 - ensuring that activities challenge pupils' understanding in number and investigative work
 - giving pupils more guidance about how to develop and improve their learning.
- Develop effective links between different subjects so pupils' learning is more relevant and meaningful.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils start at the school with attainment slightly higher than the national average. National tests at the end of Year 6 show that over the past three years, attainment has been above average when they leave. Recently, pupils' attainment in mathematics and science has dipped as, but progress rose in both these subjects in the latest national assessments. Lessons observed indicate that this trend is continuing, but slowly. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in reading and writing, but like other pupils, this is not matched in mathematics and science. Those who learn more quickly or easily make satisfactory progress rather than good, because they are not always challenged sufficiently in lessons. Pupils from minority ethnic groups also make better progress in English than mathematics and science. Progress between classes throughout the school varies considerably largely due to inconsistencies in teaching. In one successful Year 6 English lesson, pupils made good progress in their attempts to compare different newspaper reports because tasks were varied to varying learning needs, pupils were actively engaged, and clear about what was required and how this helped their learning. In a less effective lesson, pupils did not have sufficient time to complete mathematical problems and became inattentive as the teacher spent too long talking to the whole class.

Pupils are positive, considerate and well behaved. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils feel safe because they know the grounds are secure and that staff, including the headteacher, are there to help them. They develop good attitudes towards health through active play, physical exercise in lessons and clubs, and effective lessons on the importance of a balanced diet. Pupils contribute well to their school and community through helping with various jobs around the school, helping improve school grounds, visiting local residential homes and raising money for charity. Not surprisingly, pupils enjoy attending. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for later life and learning because they have secure basic skills, behave well and are well motivated to contribute and develop.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate
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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Effective care, guidance and support of all pupils, including those who are more vulnerable, contribute to their good behaviour, motivation and positive attitudes. Arrangements for pupils joining the school and moving onto secondary school are good. Those who join after the beginning of Year 3 are paired with a 'buddy' who helps support them in the early days. Pupils play a significant part in caring for each other and supporting each other in and out of class. Pupils are generally supported well, although this occasionally varies between classes. Breakfast club provides an enjoyable, healthy start for those who attend.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, and all required areas are covered. Teachers frequently use information and communication technology in lessons, but pupils do so less often. Subjects tend to be taught as separate entities and their full relevance to day-to-day life is occasionally limited. Enrichment through a range of popular clubs and visits is good.

The quality of teaching throughout the school varies in quality, but is generally satisfactory. The quality in a large proportion of lessons seen during the inspection was good. There are high points; for example, in well-taught lessons, pupils are actively engaged in suitable tasks which are well matched to their specific levels of learning and they are clear about how they can achieve explicit lesson objectives. This does not always happen, however, as teachers occasionally talk too much, work set is sometimes

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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too easy or difficult and pupils do not always know how to improve their learning. Marking and explanations in lessons vary considerably in their quality and do not always show pupils how to improve.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher and deputy headteacher have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and are beginning to remedy its weaknesses, including the way resources are organised and used. Consequently, pupils make better progress in their learning than was recently the case and exhibit good personal development. They are kept healthy and safe through sound procedures for safeguarding, although systems to monitor and develop these, although secure, are limited. Parents and carers are gradually responding to the school's initiatives to engage them because the headteacher is working well to develop links beyond the school gates. Other leaders and managers are very new to their current roles and responsibilities, but established staff now have more information, scope and accountability than before. Ambition and drive are permeating the whole school community. A member of senior leadership said, 'Commitment and enthusiasm in senior leadership meetings is palpable' whilst a parent commented, 'We are all on board for change and improvement.' Teaching is improving through monitoring, but it is not yet extensive. Leaders and managers monitor the progress of different groups and are taking steps to improve the way all groups progress, in order to ensure equal opportunities. Community cohesion is satisfactory as the school is having a positive impact locally and further afield. Formal evaluation of the school's provision is at an early stage so further improvements have not yet been identified. Governors have a satisfactory understanding of the school, but visits to monitor the school's work first-hand are occasional, rather than systematic. Partnerships with other schools and agencies are sound, but currently have limited influence on improving pupils' academic progress across all subjects.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3

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	
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

Most of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were positive about all aspects investigated. Few provided further comments on their thoughts or their children's experiences. The only question to which responses were less favourable was about whether the school takes suggestions made by parents and carers into account. The largest negative response was from a very small minority of parents and carers who do not feel that the school keeps them informed of their children's progress or helps them to support this themselves. The inspection found that although the school sends out newsletters and reports and is becoming more open to parents and carers, for example with the new entrance foyer, links with them remain at a merely satisfactory level, reflected in the low uptake of attendance at events such as curriculum evenings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Whybridge 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 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 220 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	55	25	45	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	60	22	40	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	35	29	53	4	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	29	34	62	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	29	33	60	3	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	27	30	55	4	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	31	32	58	1	2	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)	15	27	32	58	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	25	34	62	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	31	28	51	2	4	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	20	33	60	2	4	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	21	38	30	55	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	47	26	47	1	2	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



24 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Whybridge Junior School, Rainham RM13 7AH

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful to us when we visited your school recently. We were very impressed with how polite and well behaved you were, especially the way so many of you held doors open for others to walk through.

We think that your school is satisfactory and developing quickly. Your headteacher and deputy headteacher know the school well, have already made a lot of improvements and are in a good position to take these further. Good care, guidance and support help you all behave well, feel safe and make strong relationships with others. Although we saw that you learn and do lots of interesting things at school, there are not always enough links between subjects for these to be sufficiently interesting or relevant for you all. We know that you have had lots of different teachers at the school over the past few years and that this has sometimes slowed your progress, especially in mathematics and science. Teaching has improved even though this varies between classes. Sometimes teachers talk for too long, reducing time for you to contribute or complete tasks, activities are sometimes a bit too easy or difficult for some of you and marking and explanations in lessons do not always show you how to improve your work or develop your learning.

We have therefore asked your leaders to improve two key things. These are

- to help you make quicker progress through having more well-taught lessons, particularly in your mathematics and science work
- to improve links between different subjects so that these become more relevant and meaningful for you all.

Perhaps you can help by telling teachers things that really help you in your learning, especially in mathematics and science.

Yours sincerely

Jo Curd

Lead Inspector

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